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THE SECEDERS

JOSEPH CHARLES PHILPOT

(In later life).

(Editor of *The Gospel Standard*, 1849—1869.)

THE SECEDERS

(1829—1869).

THE STORY
OF A
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING
AS TOLD IN THE
LETTERS
OF

1802-1869

JOSEPH CHARLES PHILPOT, M.A.
(Fellow of Worcester College, Oxford, 1827-35),
AND OF

1803-1864

WILLIAM TIPTAFT, M.A.
(Vicar of Sutton Courtney, Berks, 1829-31).

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
J. H. PHILPOT, M.D.

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For the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.—
Luke xvi. 8.

Every child of God has a judgment-seat set up in his own heart.—*William Tiptaft.*

True Faith's the Life of God,
Deep in the heart it lies;
It lives and labours under load,
Though damped it never dies.
—*Joseph Hart.*

The more experience is spiritual the more it is real.—*Viscount Haldane.*

The worth of a sentiment lies in the sacrifices men will make for its sake.—*Joseph Conrad.*

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I stand before Him, Whose eyes are as flames of fire, to search out the secrets of my heart. And what is this poor vain world with all its gilded-clay, painted-touchwood honours and respectability, and soap-bubble charms? What is all the wealth of the Church piled up in one heap, compared to a smile of a loving Saviour's countenance?

J. C. Philpot.

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PREFATORY NOTE.

THE two series of Selected Letters here reprinted were first published separately more than sixty years ago, and have been long out of print. As in their lives the writers were so closely identified in doctrine, experience, and practice, and were so warmly attached to each other in Christian brotherhood, their Letters are now brought under one cover, with an Introduction to explain the circumstances under which they were written. Doubtless their main appeal will still be, as before, to the "strangers scattered" throughout the world, as in the days of the Apostle, but separated from it, because, like the writers of the Letters, they have been taught to keep their eyes fixed on "Everlasting Light." Nevertheless, in the years since they first appeared, a new generation has arisen, a generation less dominated by sectarian as well as by secularist prejudice, and patently dissatisfied with much of the religion, and with all of the unbelief of the present day. So that here and there these pages may possibly fall into sympathetic hands, and find an entrance into hearts which admit the great significance of authentic spiritual experience, and ask, above all things, for evidence of single-heartedness and absolute sincerity of conviction in what they read.

Lastly, and quite apart from the living interest of the story they tell, the Letters may fairly claim to be an addition of permanent value to the Literature of Religion.

For convenience of reference the Letters of William Tiptaft are numbered in Roman figures (I.—LIII.), those of J. C. Philpot in ordinary type (1—31).

THE SECEDERS.

INTRODUCTION. PART I.

I. A BEAUTIFUL FRIENDSHIP.

IN the fruitful vale of Berks, amid a maze of lanes and by-roads, near the edge of the downs and only a mile or two South of the spot where wicked men have planted Didcot Junction, lies the ancient village of East Hagbourne, with its late-Norman Church, its half-timbered cottages, its old wayside praying-cross, and its big yews clipped into the semblance of beehives. In such a setting just a hundred years ago, in July, 1829, to be precise, at a clerical gathering held in its pleasant vicarage, two earnest young clergymen, neither of whom had yet completed his twenty-seventh year, happened to meet, practically for the first time, and then and there to lay the foundations of a friendship, of which it might be said, as of a happy marriage, that it had been veritably made in heaven, because each brought to it gifts which the other needed. One, the younger by five months, had come over on foot from his newly-furnished vicarage at Sutton Courtney, a large and at that time unadvertised village on the Isis, as the Thames above Dorchester was then locally called, to which living he had been presented no longer back than the previous February by the Dean and Canons of Windsor. But the other, having still more recently vacated his stately rooms in Worcester College, Oxford, of which, however, he still remained a Fellow, had had a ten-mile ride across country and river from his cheerless lodgings on the green at Stadhampton, a remote, unhealthy village in the waterlogged valley of the Thame, of which he had held the Perpetual Curacy for something over a year.

In the course of that summer afternoon, weary, perhaps, of discussing the burning question of the day, Catholic Emancipation, they drew apart from the others and paced the vicarage garden side by side, diving into each other's minds and hearts. And they could no more have told whither, under Providence, their new intimacy was to lead them, than the impetuous Isis and the pensive Thame, when they join streams by Dorchester meadows, can foresee the Essex Flats.

Thirty years later, after they had long since passed through their days of storm and stress, and each had found a peaceful, if obscure retreat, I knew them both as intimately as a child can know his elders, for one was my father, Joseph Charles Philpot, of blessed memory, and the other, no whit less worthy of enduring affection and esteem, was my mother's uncle, William Tiptaft, of St. John's College, Cambridge.

Despised and "disallowed indeed of men," self-separated as far as is humanly possible from a hostile world, following Christ, to quote my father, "not in respectability and honour, with maces and organs and greetings in the market-place, and 'Rabbi, Rabbi,' but in contempt and shame," they were nevertheless fashioned, I venture to claim, on the pattern of the prophets and the saints of old, who also had no honour in their own time and tribe, because they would not bow down to the idols of the day. They had given up almost everything men value for what they felt to be the truth, and like all who are guided by the Holy Spirit in the footsteps of their Lord, they had their full share of trials and afflictions, of doubts and misgivings. Yet had they their recompense. For, as my father was able to affirm out of a long experience, "the life of faith is the most blessed that a man can lead upon earth." They cherished no vague, sentimental yearnings after the bygone Ages of Faith. They lived and moved in one, surrounded by their humble, but devoted followers.

Seen through the haze of sixty years, their lives read like a romance. Beside their willing descent into obscurity, Biographies of successful climbers, of aspiring churchmen even, and others, who have helped themselves to fame, leave me lukewarm, for the secret of romance lies, not in success, but in self-sacrifice. And yet outside their own connection their names are scarcely known. You will search for them in vain in the hospitable pages of the Dictionary of National Biography. Their story has never been properly told, still less advertized, nor that of the obscure religious revival in which they played a leading part. Told it will certainly some day be, though it may have to wait for a century or two and an abler pen than mine, when it will naturally fall into its appointed niche in the religious record of the nineteenth century. For, when faithfully recorded, authentic spiritual experience, such as miraculously changes a man's whole purpose in life, has a perennial value and, in the long run, an astonishingly wide appeal. "The more experience is spiritual," Lord Haldane has told us, "the more it is real." And sooner or later, abuse it as one may, the world can be counted on to do justice to those of its rebels whose only crime it has been to arraign its idolatries, and to search after the Abiding Reality behind its passing show.

Meanwhile the materials for such a narrative are here to hand, told partly in the Letters of the two friends, and partly in the copious extracts I have made from my father's writings, as well as from the *Memoir of William Tiptaft*, which he published shortly before his own death in 1869. If, sometimes, carried away by my interest in their lives, I have been tempted to describe, from my own memory and at undue length, the scenes amid which they were laid, the reader must pardon—and skip.

To me with my four-score years it is no great effort to carry my mind back to that critical July afternoon a century ago, and to visualize the two ardent young seekers after truth pacing the vicarage lawn in their formal clerical garb, of tall silk hats, black broad-cloth coats with wide, high roll-collars, soft white pleated shirtfronts, their necks imprisoned up to their jaws in high stocks and snowy cravats, their tight black trousers kept in place securely by riding-straps passed under their Oxford shoes.

Both are good-looking men, my father remarkably so. He is the taller and evidently the less robust and active of the two, with the stoop of one who has pored much over the lamp-lit book, and whose chest is not too strong. His fine, dark, impressive eyes, inherited from his Huguenot mother, and the high fixed colour over the cheek-bones—ruddy, like young David's—also hint at some delicacy of constitution. When for a moment he takes off his hat to wipe his moist brow with a large bandana handkerchief, his straight raven-black hair is seen to be brushed in a smooth wide band across a pale forehead, which is broad rather than high. Indeed, neither he nor his new acquaintance can boast of the poet's domed head. His movements are rather languid, not full of breezy life like those of his companion, who has on this occasion to bridle his pace to the other's more measured and meditative tread. For usually the young Vicar of Sutton Courtney is one who walks about most briskly on his Master's business and wastes no time in futile speculation. He is a very earnest, active Christian, and some day his overflowing energy will wear him out. He comes of an old stock, which, through generations of work upon the land as yeoman farmers, has yet retained the delicate aquiline features of a remoter ancestry. He has a squareish head, a pale face, grey eyes, fine silky light-brown hair, and the look of one who loves his fellow-men.

"About this time," to quote my father's record of their first encounter, "I belonged to what is called a clerical meeting, a few of the evangelical clergy of the neighbourhood meeting together once a month at each other's houses for the purpose of reading the Bible, prayer and religious conversation. Some time in May, 1829,* I was present at one of these assemblings, I think, if I remember right, at Wallingford, and there for the first time I met William Tiptaft, who had lately joined. He, as being a stranger, said little at the meeting, nor did we come at all close together. We met, however, again early in the same summer at another clerical meeting at Hagbourne, near Sutton Courtney, and there, as we were walking out for a little air, after the main business of the day was over, he drew near and began to converse on the things of God. At that time I was further advanced, at least in doctrine and a knowledge of the letter of truth, than he was, being a firm believer in election and the distinguishing doctrines of sovereign grace, which I preached according to the ability that God gave. We therefore soon got on the topic of election, when I at once perceived that he had not been led into the grand truths of the gospel, and though not altogether opposed to them, yet like many others in his state, viewed them with a measure of both fear and suspicion. I was struck, however, even then with his great sincerity of spirit and the thoroughly practical view which he seemed to take upon all matters of religion, considering them, as he always did so markedly through

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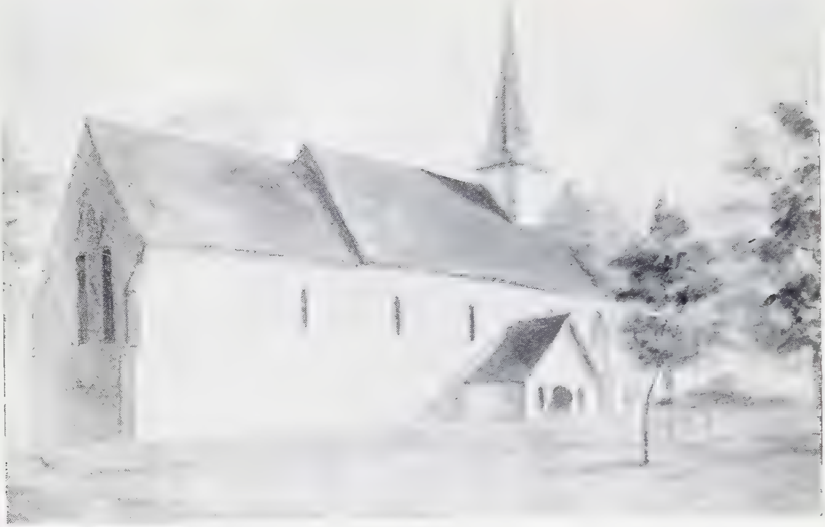
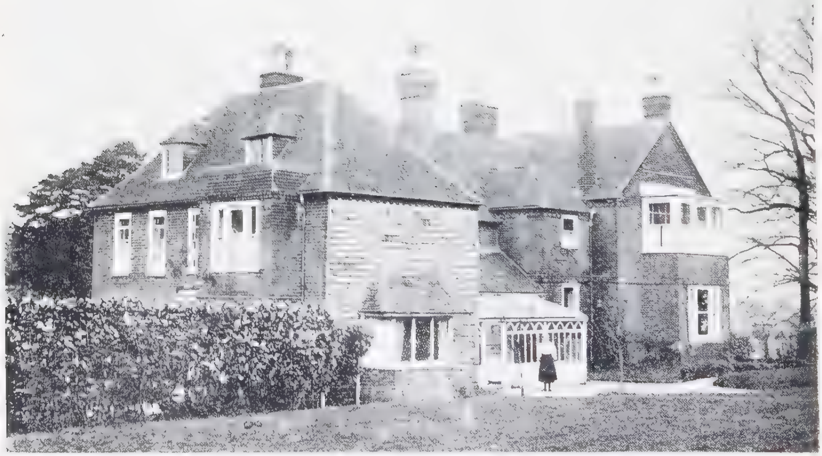
* From a letter of William Tiptaft's, on whom this first meeting seems to have made a deep impression, we learn that it really took place "at Mr. Langley's, Wallingford," on June 11, 1829.



RIPPLE CHURCH

(Before being re-built—from a Sepia Sketch, dated 1807).



RIPPLE RECTORY

(With later additions).

the whole of his subsequent life, as the great, the all-important, the one thing needful for time and for eternity."*

In this encounter, it may be worth noticing, it was the new Vicar of Sutton Courtney who made the first advances. It was characteristic of him, for he was a very friendly and forthcoming person, much more so than my father, who was naturally reserved and not very easy to know. In fact, to use the current phrase, William Tiptaft was a typical extravert. If I may borrow the description of a distinguished psychologist, "he wore his heart upon his sleeve, showed his emotions vividly upon his face, talked and gesticulated freely and easily, and soon made friends with those to whom he was drawn." He was naïve, fervid and trenchantly sincere, though neither very intellectual nor fond of books. Even later on, if one may be forgiven the misquotation, "his studie was on litel *but* the Bible." Newspapers he systematically banned, as inventions of the Evil One, and who shall say that some are not ?

There is a passage in one of my father's Reviews, contrasting the two great Genevan Reformers, Jean Calvin and Guillaume Farel, which might have been written of himself and his new friend in their subsequent relations, and which may be here conveniently quoted, before we pass on, or rather go back, to consider their parentage, and what in a medical casebook would be termed their "previous history."

"As coadjutors Calvin and Farel were admirably mated. Farel was a man of action, Calvin a man of thought ; Farel was a preacher of fiery eloquence, Calvin a writer of deep, but calm Scriptural knowledge. Both were ardent lovers of truth, bosom-friends and affectionate brethren for life, and so matched as fellow-labourers, that Farel's impetuosity urged on Calvin's slowness, and Calvin's judgment restrained Farel's rashness."†

While my father, for instance, always distrusted "enthusiasm," false fire, and the wide-flung net, and preferred to preach to those who had already been converted (in many cases by his friend), William Tiptaft had in him much of the revivalist. The fact that so few men were really "troubled by their sins" was to him a perpetual grief. To the end of his days he continued to call men to repentance in a loud and resonant voice which could fill the largest building, shaking his head, twisting one white hand upon the other and bringing out his curt sentences slowly and deliberately, with pauses between, as if he had been driving in a heavy nail. " A little time will sweep us all into the grave, and where will our souls be ? We are fit to die, or we are not. Is my soul quickened ? Am I born again ? Are my sins pardoned ? What is my real state before God," and so on. The effect of this impassioned iteration would have been only impaired by any intrusion of doctrinal dialectic. "The Gospel of the grace of God," wrote my father, "is not a thing to be proved, but a truth to be believed. It is not submitted to our reasoning powers, as a subject for critical examination, but is a message from God, addressed to our conscience, feelings and affections. For this reason men fond of argument and proving everything by strictly logical deduction generally make very poor preachers." " In the Scriptures," he says elsewhere, " God does not argue." An august example !

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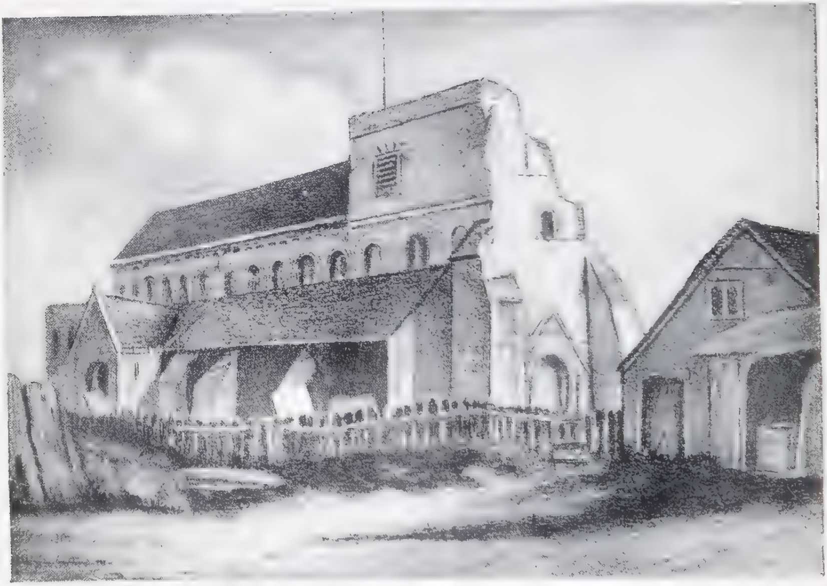
* Philpot, J. C. *Memoir of William Tiptaft.* Second Edition, p. 17. London, J. Gadsby, 1867.

† Philpot, J. C. *Reviews;* Reprinted from the *Gospel Standard,* Vol. 1, p. 595. London, 1901.

II. A SON OF THE CHURCH.

THE Rectory of Ripple—delightful name ! where my father first saw the light on September 13, 1802, lies in a shady oasis on the bare chalk uplands a mile or two inland from Walmer, Deal, and the coast of Kent. The Church has been rebuilt since that date, and only the two centuries-old yews remain to stand sentinel over the new-made grave of John French, Earl of Ypres, of Ripple Vale. But the old embowered rectory is still there, in which my father played and read, but mostly read, for he was a studious child, in the years when Bonaparte, the Corsican Ogre, was still a name to keep order in any nursery near the sea. His father, the Reverend Charles Philpot (1760 1823) whose life just overlapped the long reign of George III, was not only Rector of Ripple, but for the last ten years of his life had charge also of that grand old Norman church, then little more than a ruin, St. Margaret's-at-Cliffe, which some returned Crusader, full of superstitious faith in the virgin-martyr of Antioch, erected on the bleak South Foreland, in order to purchase, as he imagined, an easy entrance into heaven. Sumptuously restored since the days when my



CHURCH OF ST. MARGARET AT CLIFFE, DOVER.

(From a Charcoal Sketch, A.D. 1800 *circa.*)

grandfather used to ride over with his pet spaniel trotting by his side to hold an occasional service beneath its dilapidated roof, it now serves the many holiday-visitors to that break-neck nook, St. Margaret's Bay.

My grandmother, twelve years younger than her husband, was Maria, only daughter of the Reverend Peter Lafargue, an unbeneficed clergyman of unmixed Huguenot descent, residing at Stamford in Lincolnshire. Thus my father may truly be said to have been reared in the very bosom of the English Church, and being by far the brightest of four brothers, of whom the eldest was destined for the Navy and the second was not bright at all, he was from his earliest childhood earmarked for its ministry. No one knew better than that erudite scholar, the Reverend Charles Philpot, how generously the Church of that day rewarded classical attainments. Himself the posthumous son of a poor, but beautiful young widow, domiciled at Leicester, he had been taken under the wing, so to speak, of his fellow-townsman, that noted oddity, the Reverend Richard Farmer, D.D., the father of modern Shakespearian criticism, and eventually Master of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, and had thus been put in the way not only of turning to good account his own literary ability and habits of industry, but of securing the friendship of some of the most eminent scholars of the day. Full, therefore, of ambition for his infant Samuel, hoping that so promising a child might some day even improve upon his own example, he took my father in hand from his earliest years, and drilled into him the elements of Latin and Greek at an age when other children were still struggling with the spelling-book.

My grandfather's hobby was historical research, and after he had attended to his parish duties and set his children their lessons, he spent his ample leisure, as I am spending mine, with a pen in his hand and books at his elbow, thoroughly enjoying himself, no doubt, as he elaborated his Johnsonian antitheses. All that he succeeded in publishing, and that anonymously, was *A Literary History of the 14th and 15th Centuries*, which shows an enquiring mind and immense research, but he was, I believe, a frequent contributor to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, which in due course rewarded him with a handsome Obituary. Now and again, as a holiday for himself and still more for his children, he would take coach to town with a £50 note in his pocket, to meet his learned friends and rummage in the public libraries, returning when his purse was empty and his note-books full. His tastes, indeed, were rather literary than clerical and, though he neglected no parish duty, religion seems to have sat upon him lightly, for my father tells us, that until he went up to Oxford in 1821, he "actually never knew that there was any such thing as religion professed beyond the mere Church of England formalism."

At Cambridge, Charles Philpot had gained the Seatonian Prize of 1790 for a poem entitled "Faith: a Vision." For him, it would seem from my perusal of it, that Faith was indeed little more than a Vision, a beautiful abstraction descending on a golden-skirted cloud, with her emblem in brilliants on her bosom, to talk to erring mortals in the strain of Law's *Serious Call;* a very different thing from the overwhelming reality it was to become to his son, the burning fire shut up in the bones, the sacred treasure for which men have gone smiling to the stake, for which even his own wife's ancestors had had their spirits, if not their bodies, broken on the wheel. To quote, once for all, my father's favourite verse, as being the most pregnant epitome I have yet found of the chequered life of the whole-hearted, single-minded follower of Christ, the boldest statement of the conviction, common, I think, to most mystics, that genuine faith is not only the gift of the Almighty, but His very life in the soul, with its inevitable rhythm of ebb and flow:

"True faith's the life of God;
Deep in the heart it lies;
It lives and labours under load,
Though damped it never dies."

The above lines would never have appealed to my grandfather. Probably he would have disliked them intensely. For he was a philosopher and not a mystic, and philosophy will always find it difficult to understand a living, and therefore a struggling and fluctuating faith, hot and cold by turns. Nevertheless, according to his lights, the Rev. Charles Philpot was a most estimable man, a typical eighteenth century figure, a good son, a good husband, a kind and affectionate parent, if something of a martinet, like other fathers of his day. None of his children, I have been told, ventured to sit down in his presence, until invited. Otherwise he was a placid soul, and not easily put out,

To judge from his miniature, he had a thick-set figure, a squareish head, a long, well-bridged nose, a fresh-coloured, clean-shaven face with short side whiskers, like the Duke of Wellington's, large well-spaced blue eyes, and the same thin, pursed lips that are to be seen in his mother's portrait. And wisely, rightly, providentially even, he had married his opposite, his counter-part, a dark, lively, impulsive daughter of the Huguenots, who had Gascon as well as Norman blood in her veins, and both beauty and a moderate jointure to recommend her, when she singled him out from among her many admirers, and determined to marry him as soon as he could find a good enough living and a suitable parsonage to take her to.

She too had been born into the Church of England, in what you might even call its upper crust, for her maternal grandfather, a Russell, had once held the richest living in England, Doddington in the Isle of Ely, worth over £7,000 a year, while Peter Lafargue, her father, and himself the son of a clergyman, having married two heiresses in succession, was quite well enough off to leave the loaves and fishes of preferment to those who stood in direr need of them. She was connected, moreover, with several high ecclesiastical dignitaries, and even through her stepmother, a niece of the Earl of Harborough (for her own mother had died in a decline when barely out of her teens) with that promising youth, E. B. Pusey, who was to be ordained at the same time and by the same hands as my father, and was to contribute as much as anyone towards setting a tottering Church of England once more on its legs again.

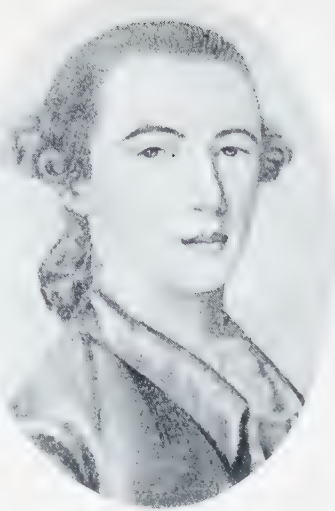
Before her marriage Maria Lafargue had lived with her father, stepmother, and two brothers at Stamford, which, strangely enough, was later on to be for over a quarter of a century the scene of my father's labours. William Wilberforce, passing through one Sunday in 1798 could find nothing better to say for it than "This seems a sad, careless place. At Church, miserable work! Remnant of Sunday-school—eight children! I have never seen a more apparently irreligious place. A shopkeeper said none of the clergy were active, or went among the poor." Perhaps, if good Mr. Wilberforce could have found time to call on Peter Lafargue in that fine old freestone corner-house facing All Saints Church, which I remember being demolished, he might have modified his opinion. For whether Peter Lafargue went among the Stamford poor or not, they certainly benefited to the extent of £50 on his death in 1804, and we have the testimony of the *Gentleman's Magazine* (Vol. 74, p. 353) that he "spent a long life in those charitable practices and friendly offices which will make his memory estimable and his loss severe." Moreover, on a tablet in the chancel of Gretford Church, his father's parish, you may read in all the pomp of Latin, how he rendered up his spirit to the Omnipotent God, counting upon the resurrection of the righteous *(piorum)* and hoping for the reward of a virtuous life—Arminian sentiments which would have sorely grieved his persecuted ancestors.

For in the seventeenth century few families had suffered more cruelly for their religion than the De Lafargues of Castillon in the sun-scorched valley of the Dordogne, Montaigne's valley.

It was on July 24, 1794, that Maria Lafargue was eventually married to the Rev. Charles Philpot. Almost exactly a century earlier, toward the end of 1692, there had landed on these happy shores, after incredible afflictions, a young widow of twenty-eight, with a two-year old baby in her arms. Her name was Lidie Grenouilleau de Lafargue, and the baby, her little Élie, the sole survivor of her four children, was destined in due time to be Maria Lafargue's grandfather. She knew no English, but her dead husband's elder brother, Dr. Jean de Lafargue, had been in this country since 1688, and money had been invested in her name in British funds. A century was to elapse, however, before her heirs and those of her dead husband could establish their claim to the property sequestrated on her flight.

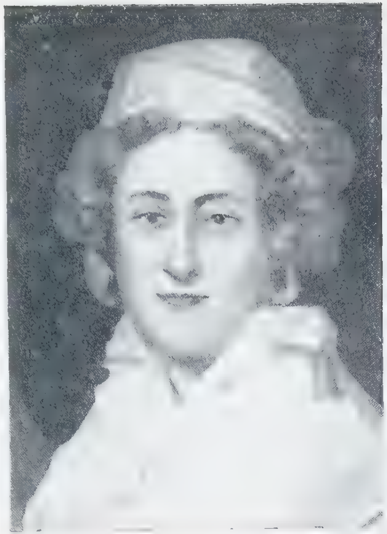
The details of her pitiable story, unknown to my father, but since established through the indefatigable researches on the spot of the late Miss Ida Layard, his distant cousin, have been published in the *Proceedings of the Huguenot Society of London*, Vol. VII, "Annals of a Quiet Family," and can only be summarized here. Her significance will appear as we proceed.

On November 12, 1684, just eleven months before a misguided France, by revoking the Edict of Nantes and declaring war to the death upon its Protestant subjects, wilfully threw overboard or, rather, transferred to its rivals, a ballast it could ill spare, a young advocate of twenty-four, named Samuel de Lafargue, was solemnly married in the Huguenot Temple of Castillon to Lidie Grenouilleau, a girl of twenty, whose father had also been an advocate. The bridegroom's parents both belonged to families of the old *noblesse*, which for generations had been faithful to the Huguenot cause. His father, old Samuel



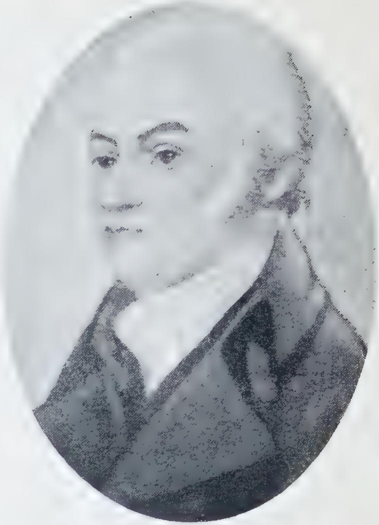
Charles Philpot.

Born 1737; Died 1760.



Frances Groome (1737—1795.)

Married (1) Charles Philpot.
(2) Joseph Glover.
(3) Robert Hubbard.



Rev. Charles Philpot, M.A.

Born 1760; Died 1823.

FATHER, MOTHER and SON.

de Lafargue, who was an elder of his church, had the right to surmount his coat of arms with the empty helmet of a Count, while he himself bore the no less empty title of *Conseiller et Médecin du Roi*. The marriage was one of the last to be celebrated in the Castillon Temple, for only a year later it was closed and razed to the ground. During the troubled years 1686–90, four children were born to the young married couple, of whom only one, the little Élie, eventually survived. Meanwhile the persecution raged, no mercy being shown either to rank or age. Old Samuel de Lafargue and his wife, too old to face the hazards of flight, were compelled to abjure, and shortly died and, after receiving "the sacraments of penitence," were buried in consecrated ground, their own cemetery having been closed. Young Samuel held out until 1692, when he too was forced to abjure. As often happened, he died very soon after, and on the second birthday of his little Élie was buried beside his parents. There was nothing now to keep his young widow in Castillon. In daily agony lest her sole remaining child should be torn from her arms and brought up a Catholic, as had happened to the children of her friends, she faced intrepidly all the perils of flight, after she had shed her farewell tears over the many graves she would never set eyes on again.

When next we come upon her traces, she is in the lodgings which her friends have found for her in Westminster. Later on she moves to a small house at Brook Green, Hammersmith, then a quiet village surrounded by market-gardens, where there is a considerable colony of her compatriots, and one of the few French churches outside London. There after forty years of widowhood, solaced by many friends of her own rank and religion, she makes her will (May 10, 1732) "after having entreated God to pardon all her sins in consideration of the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ, my Saviour and Redeemer." Three weeks later the will is proved. I have examined the signature, which exactly resembles that with which she had signed the marriage register forty-eight years previously.

Meanwhile her little Élie has become the Rev. Elias Lafargue, M.A., of Clare College, Cambridge, and Rector of one of the pleasantest livings near Stamford, though rather too near the Fens, that of Gretford on the little river Glen. He remains a somewhat shadowy figure, who marries when he is 34, has at the age of 47 an only son, Peter, and dies when he is 63, leaving his widow well provided for, with "chariot, chaise and horses," etc. The most vital thing he ever did for his progeny was to marry the grand-daughter of a notable *persecuté*, Pierre Samson de Cahanel of St. Lô in the Côtentin, and thus to temper the warm Gascon blood of the Lafargues with a dour Norman element. For after a long imprisonment at Coutances, M. de Cahanel, described as "one of the most obstinate Huguenots in the Kingdom," had spent a year in the Bastille, where he turned a deaf ear to all the honeyed persuasions of the famous Bossuet, sent especially by Louis XIV to visit him in prison, had then been immured in the dreaded dungeons of Loches in Anjou, and finally expelled the kingdom as hopelessly *opiniâtre*, which I can only translate "pig-headed."* His wife and two of his daughters, having abjured, were allowed possession of some of his considerable estates after they had been devastated by two large punitive garrisons quartered on them. Of three other daughters who rejoined him in this country, one married Pierre Jacques Du Desert-Dieu, and became the mother of Mrs. Elias Lafargue, while another became an ancestress of all the Luards.

Now the whole point which these, perhaps tiresome, ancestral details are meant to lead up to, is this, that the Rev. Peter Lafargue, the only son of Elias and his French wife, had not a single drop of English blood in his veins, and that his daughter Maria, like the Newman brothers, whom we shall meet later on, might be fairly described as quite half a Huguenot. It was from her, beyond a doubt, and not from the placid Rector of Ripple, that my father derived his most salient characteristics, his warm and sensitive temperament, his firm and passionate devotion to truth, his gift of speech, restrained as it always was by a peculiarly French lucidity of thought and orderliness of presentment, and lastly his fresh complexion, his coal-black hair and his wonderful eyes. No pure-bred Anglo-Saxon ever looked out upon the world with eyes like his, large, dark, luminous eyes, which could flash and lower and blaze and melt, and in fact do anything but twinkle. So much for his ancestry.

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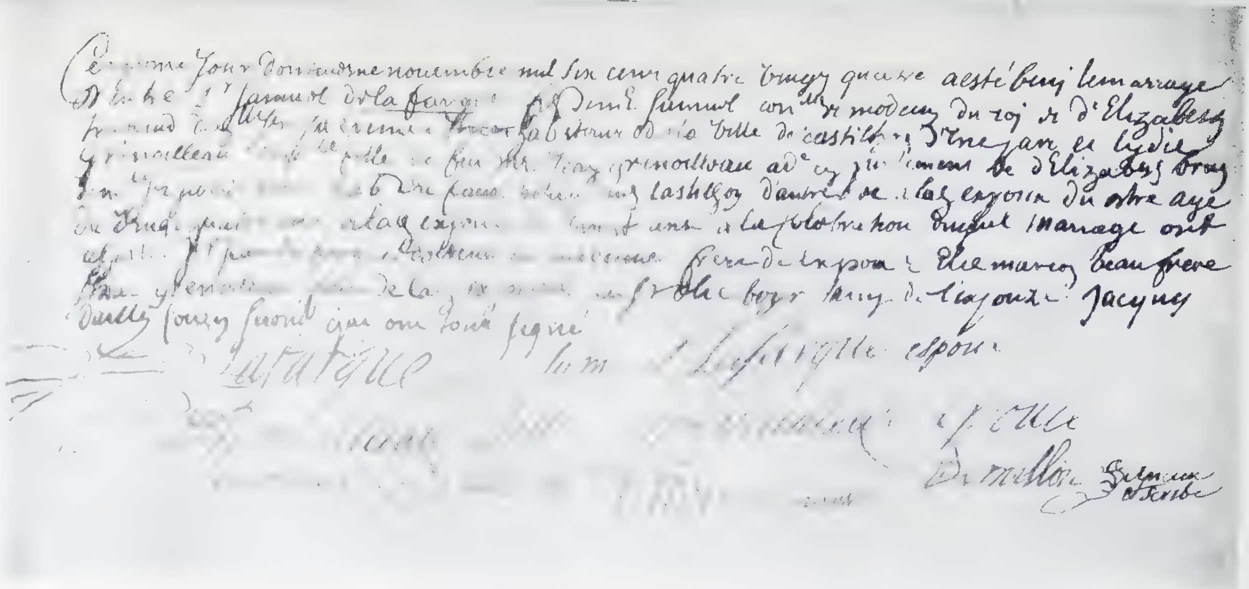
* *Archives de La Bastille*, Vol. viii., and *Proceedings of the Huguenot Society of London*, Vol. viii., 1. "Huguenots in the Bastille."



HUGUENOT MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE.

MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE OF SAMUEL DE LAFARGUE AND LIDIE GRENOUILLEAU.

Translation.

This day, the Twelfth of November, 1684, a marriage has been celebrated between Sr Samuel de la fargue, son of Maitre Samuel Conseiller et Médecin du Roi, and of Elizabeth Trapaud, demoiselle, his father and mother, residing in the town of Castillon, on the one part; and Lidie Grenouilleau, demoiselle, daughter of the late Maitre Jean Grenouilleau, advocat-ès-parlement, and of Elizabeth Brun, demoiselle, her father and mother, residing in the faux bourg of the said Castillon, on the other part; the said bridegroom being twenty-four years of age, and the said bride twenty; at which marriage there were present Sieur Jean la fargue, Doctor of Medicine, brother of the bridegroom, and Élie Marcon, his brother-in-law, Isaac Grenouilleau, brother of the said bride, and Sieur Élie Royère, her friend, Jacques Dailly, second cousin, who have all affixed their signatures. Demillon, Ancien et Scribe.

III. AFFLICTED FROM HIS YOUTH UP.

The Revd. Charles Philpot and Maria his wife had eight children, no unusual family in those days, but only two of each sex succeeded in arriving at full maturity. The seeds of consumption found their way into that pleasant rectory and filled it with sorrow and apprehension. Between his eighth and his eighteenth year my father saw four of his young housemates, including his midshipman brother, carried to their graves in Ripple churchyard, in full view of the rectory windows, and who shall say with what terrors of death and judgment it must have filled his impressionable soul? The same thing was happening among his young cousins, the children of Colonel Lafargue. Few, indeed, of the crowded nurseries of that date were without their vacant chairs. "Oh! say not thou that the former days were better than these!"

At the early age of nine my father had been sent away to Merchant Taylors' School in London, with the idea, perhaps, that he might be safer there. It was too late. The infection which was already draining the life out of his two small sisters, had already laid its grip on him, and he was soon hurriedly brought home again, to recover or to die. In effect he did neither. For though, after hovering for weeks between life and death he began to get better, he was never again to enjoy that perfect health, which Amiel has aptly called the chief of liberties. The infection had fallen on what the doctors call the peritoneum, the covering of the bowel, for the Ripple cows must have been riddled with tubercle, and convalescence was, as usual, tedious and painful. We hear of him lying for hours on the hearthrug before the fire, with a soft cushion beneath his little inside to quiet his pain, and reading, reading endlessly. His father had a well-stocked library, and he devoured book after book, histories. novels, restoration plays, some of which he confessed in after years had been better left unread, though to this omnivorous reading, continued throughout his early years, he no doubt owed not only his multifarious information, but much of the fluency, the charm and the sense of style, which are to be found both in his sermons and in everything else that came from his pen. Thus the long months of inaction were by no means wholly wasted, for his father's careful tuition, to which he had already owed so much, was resumed, and moreover, like every clever child, he was quite able to educate himself.

Eventually he recovered sufficiently to be sent away again to a London school, but this time to St. Paul's, still housed in the shadow of the Cathedral, and here he remained from his twelfth to his nineteenth year. We hear nothing of games and playing-fields, but of long hours spent over Latin, Greek and even Hebrew. Left to themselves when out of school, the boys would play about anywhere, even, as I gather from one of my father's sermons, amongst the big stones with which the admired Waterloo Bridge was then being built. But there was no slacking in the class-room. In those days education was a most strenuous business. By the time a boy went up to the University he was expected to be able not only to translate fluently from two dead languages, but to compose in either, both prose and verse. To apply to my father a phrase which he once used of the Newman brothers, his intellect even before he left St. Paul's had been "refined and cultivated to the highest point by the most indefatigable study." And his school rewarded it, on his leaving, with the greatest honour it was in its power to bestow, that of Pauline Exhibitioner.

Having gained an open scholarship at Worcester College, my father went up to Oxford at Michaelmas, 1821. In the following year his studies were again interrupted by a serious illness, probably a tubercular pneumonia, which nearly cost him his life, left on him permanent traces, and in the end no doubt led to his comparatively premature death. It was the day of drastic treatment, and the doctors did their best to slay him, but, having changed their tactics when the breath was nearly out of his body, were happily able to congratulate themselves on having saved his life. In spite of this set-back he succeeded in taking a First in Classics at the Michaelmas examination of 1824, being one of the four so placed.

His father, alas! was no longer alive to welcome the success to which he had himself so largely contributed. He had died quite unexpectedly of a stroke (Feb. 1823), before he had completed his sixty-fourth year, leaving behind him a bulky MS. *History of the Religious Wars in France*, on which he had been engaged for years, and which his widow, in despair of ever finding a publisher, eventually committed to the flames. Meanwhile, leaving the embowered rectory, which had witnessed so many tears, she had moved with her three other surviving children to a house at Walmer, within a walk of her old home, where we shall meet them later on. (See Letter, No. 1.) Joseph Charles was now the only hope of the family, and he would soon be off his mother's hands. If he only took as good a degree as they all expected, he would be able to earn his living at Oxford as a private coach, until a Fellowship should fall vacant. Then would follow ordination, a public tutorship, followed in due course by a College living and further promotion. The ball would be at his feet. Given fair health and prudent conduct, there was scarcely any position within the Church of England to which he might not reasonably aspire. His dead father's dearest ambition might be realized. "Why, but for the grace of God," as one of his humble admirers once put it, "he might have been a bishop," a bishop in lawn sleeves, like his old class-mates, Alfred Ollivant, of Llandaff, and James Prince Lee, the first Bishop of Manchester. But, as my father so often reminds us, God's thoughts are not our thoughts, nor His ways our ways.

All came off according to plan. He took his First in Greats, as already stated, and finding no difficulty in obtaining pupils as a private coach, he remained up at Oxford all through 1825 and well into 1826. He describes himself at this period as being not, indeed, what is called "a gay young man," not living an immoral life, but still utterly dead in sin, "without God and without hope in the world, looking forward to prospects in life, surrounded by worldly companions, and knowing as well as caring absolutely nothing spiritually for the things of God."

Those years, indeed, of 1825-26, happened to be a most pregnant period in the history of the University. For in its quiet precincts the scene was even then being set and the actors prepared for a drama that was to convulse the religious world, in short, the Oxford Movement. It was in 1826, states my father in one of the last Reviews he ever wrote, that the leaven was first put into the meal. He was in the very centre of the original movement, he tells us, and personally knew some of its leading originators. Of these by far the most important in his eyes was the Reverend Charles Lloyd, D.D., Regius Professor of Divinity and eventually Bishop of Oxford, preferments which he owed largely to the esteem and gratitude of his former pupil, the rising statesman, Robert Peel, who loved him as a brother, and took his counsel in all matters relating to the Church. The son of a most successful schoolmaster, Dr. Lloyd when a youth had come under the influence of some of the cultured Catholic priests, whom the French Revolution had driven out of their homes. He had learnt much from them, and had formed a very different opinion of their piety and learning from that held by his orthodox brother-dons. Full of ambition to found a school of divinity at Oxford, which might be able to hold its own against its German rivals, the new Regius Professor started his historic private classes, comprising nearly all the rising men of the University, over whom, to quote my father, "from his ability, learning, strong mind, blended with a most amiable temper and disposition, he exercised a remarkable influence. With this private class Dr. Lloyd read and discussed the history of the Council of Trent and that of the English Prayer-book, in such a way as to imbue his pupils with a respect for Roman Catholics and Roman Catholic doctrine, which to them was an entirely new notion."* Some of these classes my father joined at the Bishop's special request, though as he tells us, he did not much admire his teaching. He dreaded, no doubt, as well he might, its Romanizing tendency, for not a few of Charles Lloyd's pupils, including the most eminent of them, J. H. Newman, eventually seceded from the English Church. Bishop Lloyd lived long enough to ordain my father, then, in the following year, having delivered a powerful speech in the House of Lords in favour of Catholic Emancipation, for which he was snubbed at Court and lampooned in the Press, he died of a severe chill, with the abuse still ringing in his ears. And his leading share in the Tractarian movement, which otherwise might have run a very different course, has been too often overlooked.

From his subsequent mention of them, I gather that among my father's intimate acquaintances at this date were four able and earnest-minded men, all of whom, for one reason or another, found themselves eventually compelled, like himself, to break away from the Church of England. They were John Henry Newman, the future Cardinal; Francis William, his younger brother; their fellow-lodger, the middle-aged Spanish ex-priest, Joseph Blanco White, who has left us one perfect sonnet and a most fascinating autobiography; "a book," wrote young Mr. W. E. Gladstone in 1845, "which rivets the attention and

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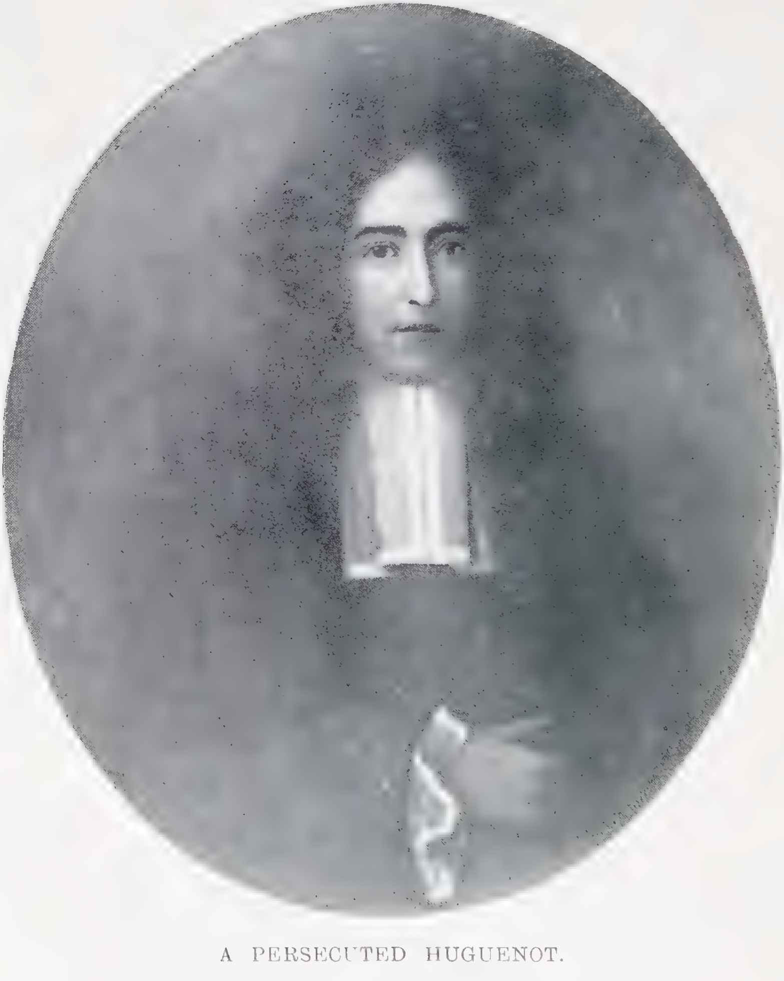
* *Reviews.* Vol. II., p. 619.



A PERSECUTED HUGUENOT.

Samuel de Lafargue.
Avocat, Parlement de Bordeaux.
Born 1660; Died 1692.

makes the heart bleed;* and, lastly, Frederick Oakeley, subsequently a Canon in the Roman Church and author of *Notes on the Tractarian Movement*, as well as of some entertaining reminiscences of Bishop Lloyd. John Keble at this date had already retired to a country parish, and my father never knew him personally, though he found much to criticize in *The Christian Year*. But I have heard him relate how once when returning as a young undergraduate to Oxford on the top of the coach, tired by his long journey out of Kent, he fell into a profound sleep, to find on awaking that a strong and sympathetic arm had been around him all the time, and had prevented his being pitched on to the road. That arm was John Keble's.

Of the Newmans, "I once well knew two brothers," wrote my father not long before his death. "I hardly like to mention their names, though none are better known through the breadth and length of the land. They were both men of most powerful intellect, refined and cultivated to the highest point by the most indefatigable study, and were distinguished ornaments of the famous University to which they belonged. Where and what are they now? One, the elder brother, whom I knew less intimately, is the most distinguished pervert from the Church of England that Rome has received; the other, once an intimate friend, an eminent professor of Classical learning, is now an avowed infidel."† I will quote no more, especially as the last statement is hardly justified, since Francis Newman held and declared that none but a fool could be an atheist. Not less able, nor less ascetic than his elder brother, Francis Newman was of the same College as my father, and became his intimate friend. Their ways for long ran strangely parallel, until they were separated by religious differences. For after resigning his Oxford Fellowship and seceding from the English Church, Francis Newman also became a private tutor in Ireland and was also baptized. Eventually, however, in his search, as he thought, for truth, he threw off almost every tenet of the Christian faith, and my father could have no more to do with him. Some years ago a Syriac Grammar was picked up on a second-hand bookstall bearing their two autographs, "J. C. Philpot" to "F. W. Newman," with the date 1829, doubtless a present on the eve of the younger man's hare-brained mission to Mesopotamia.

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* Blanco White told my father that when Ugo Foscolo, the eminent Italian poet, heard from his lips that he had joined the English Church, all he said was "Povero Bianco!" "A volume was in those words," is my father's comment.

† *Gospel Standard*, Vol. XXXII., February, 1866, p. 55. *Reviews*, 2, p. 582.

During the very years when my father used to preach every summer at the chapel in Gower Street, Francis Newman, as Professor of Latin, was holding his classes at University College, immediately opposite, though there is no record that they ever met. But I have been told, that before his own death in extreme old age, thirty years after my father's, F. W. Newman spoke very affectionately of his former friend.

IV. THE TURNING POINT.

AND now we come to the turning point in my father's life. Towards the end of 1825 a wealthy Irish gentleman, posting home from London, broke his journey at Oxford in the hope of finding and engaging there a resident tutor to prepare his two sons for the University. Having failed in his object, he was on the point of leaving early the next morning, when some trivial accident happened to detain him. The delay gave my father the chance of seeing him. He was offered the post and accepted it, with such momentous consequences for himself, that he ever afterwards attributed the whole incident to nothing less than the direct intervention of Providence.

But he shall tell the story in his own words. I would merely premise, for the sake of the general reader, that amongst the earnest little communities to which he and William Tiptaft eventually attached themselves, the demand was all for "experimental," or, as I should prefer to call it, "experiential" preaching. Their modest, hidden-away little chapels were crowded with eager and critical students of practical psychology, in its original sense of "soul-lore," and the intimate auto-biographical "experience," so far from being ruled out, or kept for the ear of a brother-priest, as it is no doubt most judiciously in more sophisticated communities, was not only welcomed, but expected. Authentic religious experience, to those who have known it, is the most absorbing of topics, to those who have not, the most wearisome and meaningless, like love-poems set before a child. "Were a Church-minister to talk about his experience in the pulpit," I find my father writing some years later, " it would rouse the drunken sexton from his nap, make the clerk's hair stand upon his head, and terrify all the respectable part of the congregation into the apprehension that the clergyman was going out of his mind." And yet what, for instance, could be more experimental and therefore more consoling to a fellow-sufferer and fellow-sinner, than parts of St. Paul's Epistles, or of St. Augustine's *Confessions*?

It is one thing, however, to confide one's soul-trouble to a sheet of paper in the privacy of one's study and quite another to avow it before a crowded chapel. That requires a picked minister, as well as a picked audience ; on the one hand, a preacher of such deadly earnestness that he has the full courage of his emotions and the power to rise well above the baser levels of self-consciousness, and on the other, a simple, childlike people, who can understand and sympathize, and yet are quick to discern whether their minister's words ring false or true.

It is, by the way, the experimental, the " felt " element in my father's sermons, for they do not contain much doctrine, which has kept them alive to this day, and carried them to every quarter of the globe where there happen to be what William James (" out of the depth of his ignorance," I can imagine my father objurgating) has dared to call " sick souls."* And the discovery was all his own. " I preached experience," he writes, " before I knew there were such men as experimental preachers. I never stole a searching ministry from anyone. But I was searched and I searched others. When I was in the Church, I used to preach at times more searchingly than I have done since." And, as we shall see, the lady of the manor invariably walked out when he assumed the black gown and climbed the pulpit stairs.

The statement I quote is from a sermon, entitled " Evidences Sealed and Open," delivered by my father at Croydon, where he was then residing, in 1869, more than forty years after the event and just six months before his death.

" In the autumn of the year 1825 I was residing at Oxford, earning a comfortable livelihood by taking pupils, and looking forward to obtaining a still higher grade in my College. But quite unexpectedly, just at this time, a very eligible offer was made to me, and a high salary held out as an inducement, to go to Ireland for a short time for the purpose of educating for the University two sons of a gentleman of wealth and high position, whose country seat was not far from Dublin. Now, it was not to my interest to accept such an offer, as I was in good circumstances, and it was rather breaking my connection with my College, and so far somewhat interfering with my future prospects, to leave the University even for a short period; but no doubt the hand of God was in it, though I saw it not; for His thoughts were not my thoughts, nor His ways my ways. But I was tempted by the large salary, and went to Ireland in 1826, where I spent that year very happily and comfortably, for I had *everything that money could buy, or heart could wish.* But all this time I knew nothing experimentally of the things of God; for though highly moral, as far as regards man, and having a great respect for religion, the grace of God had not then touched my heart.

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* " Even so fine, so sympathetic, and so unbiased an investigator as the late William James displays what must appear a schoolboy crudity to those really acquainted with the utterances of the great religious mystics."—John Middleton Murry.

"But in the beginning of 1827, in the early spring, the Lord was pleased to bring upon me a very great trial and affliction, which I cannot name, but it was one of the greatest sorrows I ever passed through in my life, and it was in and under that affliction that the Lord was pleased, I have every reason to believe, to begin His work of grace upon my soul, and to do for me the things I have spoken of, in giving me the light of life, planting His fear in my heart, pouring out upon me the spirit of prayer, and communicating those other 'sealed evidences' of the first kind, which I have laid before you; for though not without a hope in God's mercy, I was not favoured until some years after with any special manifestation of Christ.

"Now when I came back to Oxford in the autumn of 1827, the change in my character, life, and conduct was so marked that everyone took notice of it. I did not perceive myself, so distinctly, this outward change, though I well knew the inward; but it was very soon observed by others, and especially at my own College, and, in fact, very soon brought upon me a heavy storm of persecution, which, with other concurring causes, eventually drove me from the University.

"I have no wish to put myself forward, and the only reason why I have mentioned these circumstances is to show, that wherever there is any real work of grace upon a man's heart, it will be made openly manifest; that others can see, as well as he can feel, that something has been wrought in his soul by a divine power, which has made him a different man from what he was before.

"It might, perhaps, have been easy for you, and cost you little sacrifice, to make a profession of religion, but it was not so with me. As Fellow of a college and looking forward to the honourable and advantageous office of public tutor, it was no small cross for me to break off old friendships and incur the dislike and contempt of the ruling authorities, and thus with my own hand pull down all my prospects of preferment and emolument for life. But there was a power resting on me in those days which made religion with me as everything, and the world as nothing."

The very great trial and affliction, "the temporal trouble," he calls it elsewhere, "which for many months cost me almost rivers of tears and sighs," was due, it will have been probably surmised, to his having been crossed in love, a wound at which none but the insensitive soul will jest. His young pupils had an elder sister, a beautiful, intelligent, serious-minded girl. Thrown much together week after week and month after month in an isolated country-house, the two young people ended by falling desperately in love with each other. For a brief space they cherished the fond hope that they might be allowed to marry. But parental discretion prevailed. A delicate youth, whose only fixed income, for by now he was a Fellow of his College, depended on his remaining single, was obviously no suitable mate for a high-born damsel reared in luxury. Everyone behaved becomingly. The girl took her stricken heart away to friends, while my father stayed on to complete his engagement, amid everything, oh irony! "that money could buy, or heart could wish."

He made no secret in after years of the intensity of his love, or the depth of his despair. "I have often wetted the pommel of my saddle with tears," he tells a friend, "amid the lonely valleys of the Wicklow hills, or galloped half-distracted along the seashore, where no eye could see, or ear could hear me cry and groan, sometimes from natural trouble and sometimes in pouring out my soul before the Lord." He never married while the lady lived, and cherished her memory as devoutly as Dante his Beatrice's. At the end of his engagement his pupils had presented him with a handsome brass-bound desk. On his return to Oxford he brought it back with him, and in its most secret drawer a few poor withered flowers, his loved one's parting gift. They were still there when he died.

A few years later a husband was found for the lady, and she succumbed in bearing his child. In my father's diary for 1837, the only one he had not the heart to destroy, are these two pitiful entries: "Sept. 6. *A.B. infantem peperit*" (bore a child). "Sept. 29. *A.B. mortua est*" (is dead). Even at this date I shrink from transcribing her real initials, although the facts, now for the first time made public, have long been known to me.*

No lapse of years could efface those months of blessed anguish from his memory. They obtrude even in his most serious Reviews. "I resided in Ireland for eighteen months at one period of my life," he tells his readers, "a time never to be forgotten by me whilst life endures, though more than twenty-seven years have rolled away since that warm summer eve, fresh to my memory as yesterday, when I left its green shores, and the beautiful Wicklow mountains faded on my sight. I have taught in the Sunday School a class of barefooted, ragged little fellows, whose habiliments smelling of turf, the least unpleasant of their odours, were sufficiently repulsive to the young collegian fresh from the elegancies of Oxford; and remember, almost with a smile, to this day the careful way in which I had to put down my foot, lest it should inadvertently tread on some of the many naked surrounding toes. I have seen and talked with the poor peasants in their smoky, miserable cabins, and been almost horrified by the spectacle of Irish misery. And I may add, that I have every reason to love Ireland, for there, in the early spring of 1827, the first beams of light and life visited my previously dead and benighted soul, and Irish valleys and mountains witnessed the first tears and prayers that went up out of the heart to the throne of grace."†

The revolution in his own spirit was so intense, so complete, so unexpected, and on the face of it so inconsequent, that he could never afterwards attribute it to anything short of a divine intervention, an unmistakable "call." Indeed, in after years, and it sometimes got him into difficulty, he was inclined to question, or at least to submit to a very jealous scrutiny, any conversion which had been less marked or less sudden than his own, although at the same time he was as suspicious of false fire and "enthusiasm" as any Oxford don. Almost from that moment he became a Mystic of the Cross, a humble follower and lover of Our Lord, and governed all his life by the truth which he believed had in that moment of vision been "impressed upon his conscience very powerfully and very distinctly by the finger of God," the truth, namely, that there is no authentic religion which is not the immediate particular gift and grace of the Holy Spirit, "that one can know nothing but by divine teaching, have nothing but by divine giving, be nothing but by divine making," a metaphysical doctrine, by the way, to which Sir William Hamilton first gave the name of "Determinism."

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* From the same diary we learn that the texts which he chose for his two sermons on the Sunday after he had heard of her death, were, "The righteous shall hold on his way," and "He discovereth deep things out of darkness, and bringeth out to light the shadow of death" (Job xii. 22).

† *Gospel Standard.* February, 1855, p. 60. Reprinted in *Reviews*, Vol. I., p. 379. The first person singular has been substituted for the editorial "We."

"All true religion," he writes a few years later, in words which give no doubt a faithful picture of that emotional convulsion, remembered in tranquillity—"all true religion has a beginning, and a beginning, too, marked, clear and distinct. That the entrance of divine light into the soul, the first communications of supernatural life, the first manifestations of an unknown God, the first intercourse of man with his Maker—that all these hitherto unfelt, unthought of, uncared for, undesired transactions should take place in the soul and the soul be ignorant of them, should know neither their time nor their place, is a contradiction. The evidence of *feeling* is as strong, as distinct, as perceptible as the evidence of *sense*. . . A man's body is alive to every feeling from a pin scratch to a mortal wound. The heart cannot flutter, or omit for a single second its wonted stroke, without a peculiar sensation that accompanies it, notices it, and registers it. Shall feelings then be the mark and evidence of natural life, and not of spiritual? Thus *feeling* is the first evidence of supernatural life—a feeling compounded of two distinct sensations, one referring to God, and the other referring to self. The same ray of light has manifested two opposite things . . . God and self, justice and guilt, a holy law and a broken commandment, eternity and time, the purity of the Creator and the filthiness of the creature. And these he sees as personal realities involving all his happiness, or all his misery in time and in eternity.

"Thus it is with him as though a new existence had been communicated, as if for the first time he had found there was a God. It is as though all his days he had been asleep and were now awakened—asleep upon the top of a mast, with the raging waves beneath ; as if all his past life were a dream, and the dream were now at an end. He has been hunting butterflies, blowing soap-bubbles, angling for minnows, picking daisies, and idling life away like an idiot or a madman . . . A sudden peculiar conviction has rushed into his soul. One absorbing feeling has seized fast hold of it, and well-nigh banished every other. 'There is a God and I am a sinner before Him. What shall I do ? Where shall I go ? What will become of me ? Mercy, O God ! Mercy, mercy ! I am lost, ruined, undone ! Fool, madman, wretch, monster that I have been ! I have ruined my soul. O my sins, my sins ! O eternity, eternity ! '"*

One more experimental passage from the same sermon is worth quoting. He is speaking of the hour when Hope begins to conquer despair, and infinite compassion to appear in the place of infinite justice. "The budding forth of Hope and the opening of this heavenly flower is a season never to be forgotten. Well do I remember the place—a little garden, hidden by buildings and overgrown with shrubs, where this flower opened in my soul. But the buildings could not hide it, nor the evergreens shade it, nor the damp close it. The bud opened, the flower burst forth, and at the same moment the eye looked up, and the mouth uttered, 'Whom have I in heaven but Thee ? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee.' "

Although in individual cases, as St. Paul, Luther, and perhaps one should add Moses, that mysterious phenomenon, a religious conversion, has been known to change the whole course of history, and to provide evidence, if evidence were needed, that "the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men and doeth according to His will among the inhabitants of the earth," none of the psychologists seem able to explain it, except by plausible metaphor, such as "sublimation of energy." Probably none but those who have experienced it, can understand what it really is, though what it *does* may be obvious to all. "The change in my character, life and conduct," writes my father, in words already quoted, "was so marked that everyone took notice of it." Whether it be a "sickness of the soul" or not, its symptoms are invariably true to type. The cases will be found almost monotonously alike.

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* *Winter afore Harvest, or The Soul's Growth in Grace.* 1837, p. 18. New Edition (Farncombe, 1904), p. 7.

First, the sufferer, suddenly overcome by disgust with himself, with the world he lives in, and all his former associates, is driven into a solitude, a wilderness, where his only possible companion is the God he has offended. He feels himself no longer the member of a flock, but a miserable, solitary soul.

Secondly, he finds a judgment-seat set up in his own heart, which turns self-love into self-loathing, or in the old phrase, "self-naughting," and awakens into a roaring lion that sense of sin which, as part of our gregarious inheritance, lies dormant in every human conscience,

Thirdly, all the desires and appetites of the flesh are for the nonce abolished, thirst alone excepted.

In other words, some force till then unknown, some overwhelming power he cannot tell whence, has for the moment over-ridden and over-ruled the three great primary instincts, which more or less consciously activate man's ordinary life—Self, Sex, and the Herd-instinct. Now these, it has been pointed out, correspond roughly to the three traditional enemies of the life of faith, the World, the Flesh, and the Devil. The last, to take it first, finds its obvious equivalent in the Self-instinct, for it is only through the "Ego" that the Tempter can find a hearing in the heart of man. The sins and excesses of the Flesh, as everyone knows, bring with them their own revenges and their own remorse. While the Herd-instinct, in which the Jews (and in later days the Jesuits) have always found and still find their strength, which every prophet in turn dreaded and denounced, still remains, for the Gentile, a subtle enemy, always striving to come between the individual seeker and his God.

Nothing emerges more certainly from the Letters here published, than the fact that the life of faith, blessed though it be, is one of unceasing conflict. The psychology of the instincts had not been worked out in my father's day, but now we know that it is the repeated endeavour and the repeated failure to reconcile their clamour with a life of consistent self-denial, a constant resistance to carnal desires, and an entire dependence on God alone, which account for the exercises and trials, the falls and shortcomings, and one may add the depressions and fatigues, which seem inseparable from the life of the spirit.

Nevertheless, that these clamorous instincts should have once been effectually silenced, if only for a time, is what constitutes spiritual re-birth. It is that which makes a man a new creature and provides him with new "values," and "another world to live in."

One comment more! Every profound emotion—and there is nothing which moves a man more deeply and to more lasting effect than authentic religious conversion — every profound emotion, I repeat, has its appointed means of expression and relief. Feeble emotion may run to waste in the sterile deserts of self-pity, or self-praise. But the deeper emotions cannot but bear fruit in free, helpful and unpaid service to others, for love has already flown out of the window when sense of duty comes in at the door. "And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her." Not seven years only, but a whole life-time of willing service were all too brief, as William Tiptaft and my father found, to satisfy that holy fear of Himself and that love of His Son, which God implants in the heart of a man, when He summons him into the wilderness to commune with Him alone.

So repugnant, indeed, to both was the idea of making gain out of the Gospel, that my father received no more than a bare curate's stipend from his two chapels, and through many years of incessant literary toil allowed others to reap the reward, though during the last few years of his life he was persuaded to accept an annual honorarium out of the profits of the *Gospel Standard*, of which he had been sole editor for more than twenty years. William Tiptaft, as already mentioned, would never take a penny, not even his travelling expenses, for his arduous labours throughout the country, and if, as sometimes happened, friends in sheer gratitude slipped a couple of sovereigns into his packet of sandwiches, their equivalent was returned by the next post. And even he did not escape calumny. (See Letter XXXV.)

But to return to my father. A religious awakening, however dramatically it may change a man's attitude to the world, can never completely revolutionize his nature. It may encourage his good points and discourage his bad, but the original soil remains. As I read my father, his new fervour of conviction served to reinforce two fundamental inborn, or inbred traits.

First, a stern veracity, an insistence on truth in word and deed, a scorn and hatred of all shams and pretences. He had been brought up in a singularly truthful household, in a generation which, for all we may say against it, still clung to the reverence for truth which it had learnt from the Puritans, and he was as alert to detect as he was ruthless in castigating every form of subterfuge and prevarication. To him lying lips were, indeed, abomination to the Lord. I think of him as a consuming fire, which burnt up everything false, specious and insincere wherewith it came in contact.

Secondly, he had an abhorrence of human pride and self-complacency, almost as much tinctured with superstition as the Greek terror of "hubris." Tennyson's "righteous self-applause" was for him an impious contradiction in terms. Self-righteousness, creature pride and fleshly holiness, whether in himself or in others, we shall find him deploring and denouncing as deadly treason to the Creator. "Pride, cursed pride," he bursts out, "is the root of that jealousy which is as cruel as the grave." Was it not through overweening pride that Satan fell? And was not the tragedy of the Fall enacted afresh in every human heart when it gave ear to the insidious whisper, "Ye shall be as gods"?

But the pride which aroused his fiercest indignation was that which apes humility. He could have feelingly echoed with the poet:

> "But to be proud not to be proud, adds more
> Sin to that pride than pride had sin before."*

V. RETURN TO OXFORD.

It can be easily imagined that with such a temper and with such a creed, my father's position when he came back to Oxford to take up his Fellowship in the Autumn of 1827, proved a desperately thorny one. Deeply as one must sympathise with the passionate young visionary, torn with suffering, and contending for the truths which he thought had been supernaturally revealed to him, one cannot help feeling just a trifle sorry for his amiable, well-meaning, self-satisfied superiors, level-headed men of business, intent upon sustaining the tranquil order of the world and the University, and on training up a constant succession of young hopefuls into due respect for the Church, the Throne, the British Constitution, and two, if not three, dead languages. Here was their prize pupil, as good a classical scholar as they had turned out for years, whom they had meant to be a help and an honour and an asset to their College, returned upon their hands an unprofitable changeling, a piece of grit between their smocthly rolling wheels, an intemperate will, not to be harnessed to their very excellent, and far from unprofitable purpose.

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* See his Review of Jonathan Edwards' *Spiritual Pride, its Deceitful Nature and Evil Fruits*. *Reviews*, Vol. I., p. 247.

Meanwhile he was no better satisfied than they. "Ofttimes," he tells us, "seated after dinner in the Common room with the other Fellows, amidst all the drinking of wine and the hum and buzz of conversation in which I took no part, I have been secretly lifting up my heart to the Lord." To quote him again: "I stand before Him whose eyes are as flames of fire, to search out the secrets of my heart. And what is this poor, vain world with all its gilded clay, painted-touch-wood honours and respectability, and soap-bubble charms? What is all the wealth of the Church piled up in one heap, compared to a smile of a loving Saviour's countenance?" What could the Oxford of 1827 make of a man who took his religion so seriously, so tactlessly as all that—an Oxford, by the way, which was divided between orthodox high-church scholars, as fond of old port as of ancient lore, and the earnest young *dilettanti* of Oriel Common-room, jocularly known as "the men of the tea-pot"? Surely his proper place, if one may apply the double metaphor without offence, was not among the eminently respectable scribes and pharisees with their mundane values, but with publicans and sinners, with the despised and rejected of men. And sooner or later he would find it out.

Some of the Fellows, one is glad to learn, were kind and considerate to the tormented youth, but their head, the Provost, who seems to have taken a violent dislike to him, soon found occasion to inform him that he would be permanently excluded, on account of his religious views, from any and every College office. As the views in question included nothing whatever contrary to the Articles of the Established Church, which the Provost had himself subscribed, my father was quite justified in resenting the decision as arbitrary and despotic. There was, however, no appeal, and the career of public tutor, to which he had so long looked forward and for which he was so eminently qualified, being thus definitively closed to him, the only alternative was parish-work.

He had no great difficulty in finding a curacy near enough to Oxford to allow of his still retaining the pleasant Fellow's rooms which had been allotted to him, overlooking the beautiful Worcester College gardens, and he was accordingly ordained by Bishop Lloyd, during his all too brief episcopate, in "the Cathedral Church of Christ in Oxford" on Trinity Sunday, June 1, 1828, side by side, as already mentioned, with that good and gifted youth, E. B. Pusey, who in his middle years, though for very different reasons, was destined to encounter even wider abuse and opprobrium than my father.

Thus rudely shaken out of conceit with the University and all the stately scholarship it represented, henceforth, like another Tertullian, he deliberately turned away from classical literature —"a mere phosphorus light, composed of dead men's brains, too faint to illuminate, too cold to kindle"—in order to bathe his spirit in the uncompromising sincerity of the Holy Scriptures, finding more food for his heart in a single chapter of Isaiah than in the noblest chorus of Aeschylus, more saving truth in the first few verses of the Epistle to the Ephesians than in all the Dialogues of Plato. He ceased, in short, from studying the word of man, in order that he might the more diligently search the word of the living God. For whoever believes as confidently as he did that the Scriptures are divinely and literally inspired, will search them, as you search a living face, for an answer to a definite appeal, such as no dead portrait can possibly give. Commentaries he held to be useless, except for occasional textual help. They usually failed one where most required. The light to be trusted was bestowed from Above, or from within, as Cowper has expressed it in a well-known verse:

"Blind unbelief is sure to err,
  And scan His work in vain;
God is His own interpreter,
  And He will make it plain."

"As the blessed Spirit of all truth is pleased to shine upon a text," I find my father writing a few years later, "a peculiar light is thrown upon it, a peculiar beauty, force, truth and power seem to shoot forth from every part of it, so that every word appears dipped in heavenly dew, and every expression to drip with honey. Whenever a text has been thus opened to me, I have seen a fulness and tasted a sweetness, which carried with it its own evidence that they (*sic*) were the words of the living God."*

Luther in 1521 expressed a similar view in his Preface to the Magnificat, "No one can understand God, or God's word unless it is revealed to him by the Holy Spirit; but no one can receive anything of the Holy Spirit, unless he himself experience it. In experience the Holy Spirit teaches as in His own school, and outside that nothing of value can be learned."

Nevertheless, though his well-thumbed classics were relegated to the shelf, for they were not sent to the hammer until seven years later, he set himself to study with all the greater diligence the languages in which the sacred writings have come down to us, and in this he persevered throughout the rest of his life. Seldom a day passed on which he did not devote a full hour every morning to the Hebrew Testament, and a like period every evening to the Greek. I can well recall how sometimes his voice would be heard booming through our little house at Stamford, as he attempted, however imperfectly, to recapture the very native accents of some Messenger of God, whose bones had crumbled to dust long centuries ago.

Seven miles South of Oxford, divided from each other by the little river Thame, are two insignificant villages, which are known to the cartographer as Stadhampton and Chiselhampton, but to their rustic inhabitants as Stadham and Chiselton. The latter, as its name indicates, lies salubriously upon the gravel and contains the seat of the Squire. But Stadham, with the church, is on the gault, a vicious subsoil, and has been described by my father as "an unhealthy village with a damp green and miry roads." The rector being long past work, my father became his Perpetual Curate, an obsolete form of incumbency which meant all the work and little pay. It was an unfortunate choice for a delicate man. So long as he was able to sleep and board luxuriously in Oxford, he did not suffer, but the plan of working his parish from his Fellow's rooms barely survived a winter's trial. The fatigue of the daily ride in all weathers on the top of his parish-work proved too arduous for him. "A great gulf seemed placed also in my feelings between my former friends and myself, and one day in particular, as I was sitting on my horse near the College gates, it was so impressed on my mind that Oxford was no place for me that I gladly turned my back on it and went to reside permanently at Stadhampton." "Moreover, my mind being at that time much impressed by, and taken up with, divine realities, I desired to live a separate, godly life, and devote myself to the care of my parish and the good of the souls of men."

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* *The Heir of Heaven*, etc., p. 8. London, 1837. New Edition, 1926, p. 2.

He took rooms at a farm-house on the Green, close to Stadhampton church and thither he had removed himself and his once beloved books shortly before the critical meeting with William Tiptaft. It was a rough, ill-fed, ill-tended life after the ordered comfort of Oxford, and the record of the seven lonely years he passed there is one of constant ill-health, over-strain and mental misery. It was partly his own fault, for he had not yet learnt to spare himself. His services on Sunday, to say nothing of his week-day work, would have tried even a robust frame. He began the day by teaching in the Sunday-school, then walked with the children to church, where he conducted the service alone, and preached *extempore* for seldom less than an hour. At the afternoon service he preached for another hour and then had the children up to the school-house, poor mites! to hear how much of the sermons they had remembered and how much understood. In the evening, in his own room, he expounded a few verses of Scripture to anyone who cared to come, closing the day with prayer.

Almost from the first he had antagonized the Squire and his wife, partly by declining to lunch with them on the Lord's Day, as his predecessors had invariably done, and partly, I think, by his honest outspokenness in the pulpit. And they were almost the only people of his own standing in the neighbourhood. "I was raw indeed when I went there," he admitted later on, "but had many trials, and few friends or counsellors in them. I often acted very rashly and hastily, and frequently mistook my own spirit for the Spirit of the Lord"—a not uncommon delusion, one may add, which has caused more persecution in the world than almost anything else.

Meanwhile his church began to fill and soon, though large for its purpose, to become uncomfortably crowded. From all the neighbourhood people flocked to hear him. On one occasion, we are told, hearers from as many as eighteen different parishes were identified among his congregation. He had, indeed, a lofty ideal of what a sermon should be. "A ministry of this kind," he writes, "gushing out of the preacher's heart and mouth as a spring of living water, is as different from a hard, dead, cut-and-dry ministry, based on study and premeditation and commentaries, as a living breathing man from a withered skeleton. Cold, dry learning is not wanted in the pulpit. What is wanted there is experience in the heart, life and feeling in the soul, and such a measure of divine power resting on the spirit as shall clothe the ideas that spring up with clear, simple, suitable language within the comprehension of the most uneducated hearer. A ministry of this kind will be fresh, original, stamped with a peculiar impress, and will carry with it a weight and power which manifest its divine Author."* This was written, it must be admitted, many years after he had left the Church of England, but the lesson had been learnt at Stadhampton.

Even to-day, when the pulpit has to compete with the Sunday Press, the "wireless," and the "pictures," any really earnest preacher can fill his church or chapel. But a hundred years ago reading was a rare accomplishment in country villages, and the pulpit provided the only means whereby a poor farm-labourer could be helped for a moment to forget his daily cares, and be taken out of himself into a wider air. Many, no doubt, came to listen to my father out of curiosity, and perhaps to hear each other soundly trounced, but there was a remnant of picked souls who found more in his message than mere entertainment, and these became his friends and faithful followers even long after he had left them, *cittadini d'una vera cittá*. To these he had opened a door out of their ignorance and poverty, to these he had given, in Santayana's phrase, "a new world to live in," and, in Nietzsche's, such a "transvaluation of values," that they never again need envy the rich their wealth, the scholar his interest, or the artist his emotion. Had they not discovered the Bible? Had they not been brought face to face with Christ? There are always, by the way, poor hungry souls who think they know the sort of a religion they want better than a whole bench of bishops, and they will walk miles, but miles, to get it (see Letter No. 18).

But now another figure appears upon the scene. A second

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* *Gospel Standard.* March 1852, Vol. XVIII., p. 97.

STADHAMPTON CHURCH.

stream has to be traced to its source, and for a time we must leave my father and his troubles.

VI. WILLIAM TIPTAFT.

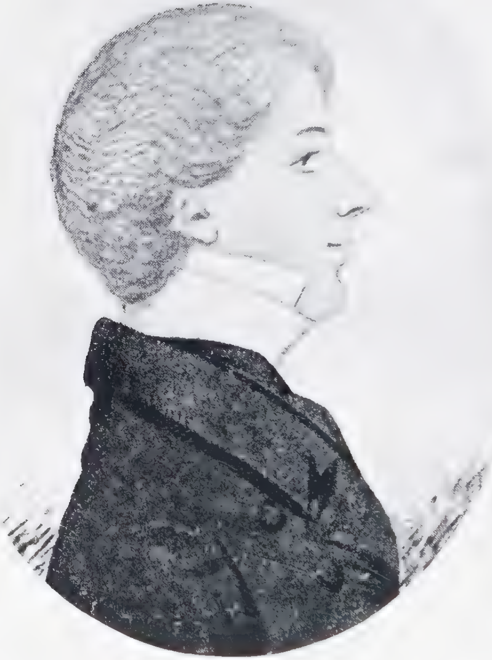
The youngest of five surviving children, three boys and two girls, William Tiptaft was born on February 16, 1803 (almost exactly a hundred years after John Wesley), at Braunston, a sequestered village in the valley of the Guash, close to the borders of Leicestershire, but within an hour's walk of Oakham, the county-town of Rutland. Here, on the evidence of the Parish Registers, his family had been settled certainly since the accession of Queen Elizabeth, if not much earlier, and they belonged to that sterling class of smaller gentry, farming their own land, which once formed the backbone of England, and which in its day produced so many distinguished men.

The name Tiptaft, now excessively rare, if not peculiar to the family in question, was known, perhaps too well, to our mediæval ancestors under its bilingual form of Tiptoft or Tibetôt. On the Battle Abbey Roll it appears as Tibtot, and probably belonged to the owner of the small fief of Tiboutôt—Theobald's or Tybalt's Toft—near Godarville in Normandy, the original Scandinavian "Toft" having been gallicized into "Tôt." Subsequently the family, a full pedigree of which will be found in Blore's *Rutland*, p. 44, flourished exceedingly as marcher-barons, statesmen, etc., and three of the name have gained admission to that Walhalla of Man's Elect, the Dictionary of National Biography. Two Tiptofts accompanied the future Edward I. on the last Crusade. Another was Speaker of the House of Commons in Henry IV's first Parliament, which passed the iniquitous measure for burning the heretic Lollards. They owned rich manors scattered all over England, at Castle Combe in Wilts, at Langar, Notts., at Wimbish in Essex, in the valley of the Gipping, near Ipswich, in the Isle of Ely, and in the little County of Rutland, some of which manors are still, no doubt, in the possession of their descendants in the female line, the families of De Ros and Manners. Practically the family died out, or at any rate passed into obscurity, with that Italianate Englishman, known as the Butcher of England, John Tiptoft, Earl of

Worcester, a true son of the Renaissance, as cultivated as he was cruel, who was beheaded on Tower Hill amid the execrations of the mob on St. Luke's Day, 1470, during a temporary rally of the Lancastrians, in revenge for the inhuman sentences he had inflicted on their friends as Edward IV's Justiciar. The splendid tomb which he built for himself and his wives, but which his headless body was fated never to occupy, is still one of the treasures of Ely Cathedral, and it provided the family at Braunston with a sort of sentimental Mecca.

There, at Braunston, for at least seven generations, William Tiptaft's ancestors had tilled and grazed their freehold acres, and latterly each in his turn had served his year as High Sheriff of his diminutive county, the last to hold that office being William's eldest brother, James, in 1819. They intermarried with their neighbours, the Cheseldens and the Burnabys, who have also contributed scions to the D.N.B. If the Napoleonic wars spelt prosperity to the yeoman class, the slump in prices that followed the peace went far to ruin them. Some sold the land they had held for generations and joined the ranks of tenant-farmers, others more wisely went with their families to the Colonies and carried their habits of industry and sobriety with them. Before William Tiptaft came of age most of the ancestral property had been sold or divided, and much of his portion, as we shall see, eventually found its way into the pockets of the poor. Braunston Church is still partly paved with Tiptaft grave-stones, but the village, sequestered amongst its fertile pastures, knows them no more.

Having lost his father when he was a child of eight, and his mother six years later, while he was still a schoolboy at Uppingham, young William had thenceforth made his home and spent his holidays with his sister Deborah, twelve years his senior, in the roomy old house at the top of Oakham market-place, around which much of our later narrative will centre. On June 11, 1816, thirteen years to the very day, as he tells us, before he first met my father at Wallingford, Deborah Ward Tiptaft had married her first cousin, William Tomblin Keal, who had just come back with a St. Andrew's M.D. to take over from his father, also William Keal, his medical practice, as well as the old house, which he had enlarged to accommodate his own growing family. Mr. and Mrs. Keal—for in those days a mere surgeon did not flaunt his title of Doctor, even if he had one—



WILLIAM TIPTAFT (1803—1864).

(As an undergraduate, from a miniature.)

were my maternal grand-parents, and we shall hear much more of them in due course.

In his *Memoir of William Tiptaft*, my father traces many of his friend's characteristic qualities to his mother, and notably "that kindness and liberality to the poor, that amiability of disposition, and that high sense of duty and religion, which, though afterwards heightened and set off by grace, would in any case have been marked features in his natural character."

The little river Guash—Drayton's "wandering Wash"—which, descending from the Leicestershire hills, falls into the Welland just below Stamford, divides the tiny county of Rutland into two almost equal parts. Some seven or eight miles below the point where it passes through Braunston, and half-way between Stamford and Oakham, there lies on the skirts of the Guash valley a pleasant village, Edith Weston, which for close on a thousand years has preserved the memory of the fair Editha, the widow of Edward the Confessor, and its proprietress until her death in 1075. Here in the eighteenth century, and for how much earlier I know not, there lived and flourished another gentle yeoman family, the Tomblins, who also supplied sheriffs to their county, and tombstones to their churchyard (see *Collectanea Bloreana*, under "Edith Weston," in the library of the British Museum). Sarah Tomblin married William Keal of Oakham, surgeon, and there are tablets to their memory in Oakham Church; while Elizabeth, her younger sister, with whom we are chiefly concerned, married James Tiptaft of Braunston. Of him not much is known, except that he was of sufficient repute to be appointed Sheriff of Rutland in 1792, four years before his wife's brother, Robert Tomblin, was pricked for that responsible office.

After nine years at Uppingham School, which before Dr. Thring was neither much better, nor much worse than its local rivals, William Tiptaft, being intended for the Church, went up to St. John's College, Cambridge, as a "pensioner" in October, 1821. "He was not," writes my father, "what is called a a reading-man, but being full of good temper and high spirits and very fond of conversation, his rooms were much the resort of men like himself, not studious and yet not altogether idle, moral, not gay and dissipated, yet cheerful and of that Athenian spirit, which is ever enquiring 'Is there anything new?'"

Though when I knew him, his fine, neat, silky hair had turned to silver, he must have been a very good-looking youth with his delicate aquiline features. Well over middle height and of solid build, he had a squareish head, a pale face, kind grey eyes, and beneath one of them a small mother's mark, which reddened and paled according to his state of health, spiritual or physical. Unlike my father, who, when once he had left the Church, kept his wide white shirt-front and snowy choker for the pulpit, and invariably on week days put off everything parsonic and dressed like a gentleman of the period, with black stock, Gladstone collar, tweed trousers, white stockings and Oxford shoes, William Tiptaft always retained the black broadcloth, white shirt-front and neat white tie, which were the usual wear of evangelical parsons at that date. When he came to stay with us at Stamford, to fill the pulpit in my father's absence, he would walk up briskly from the station with his little black bag, and at the end of his visit walk as briskly away. While he was with us *The Times*, *Blackwood*, and *The Quarterly*, which my father always took in, had to be put out of sight, for he dreaded lest they should draw him away from Christ. Thirty years had passed since he had left the Church, and he had learnt much wisdom in the interval, but he always retained its uniform.

While still an undergraduate he came home to Oakham one vacation in the early stage of what was, no doubt, a severe attack of typhoid fever, in those days a very prevalent and terribly fatal malady. For weeks he lay between life and death. It brought him, as can be easily imagined, into peculiarly intimate relations with his brother-in-law, Mr. Keal, who in those nurseless days tended him night and day with such watchful and devoted skill, that he eventually recovered, while two of his fellow-students who had taken the infection at the same time fell victims to it. "But when God has a work for a man to do," to quote my father, "he is immortal till that work is done." William Tiptaft, we may be sure, gave thanks where thanks were due. Nevertheless, to save the soul of the man, who under providence had saved his body from an untimely and unregenerate grave, became for him, as soon as he realized the danger of his own, a matter of passionate concern, the driving force behind all the long and earnest letters which it is my privilege to republish.

Fully recovered from this illness, he went up for his public examination with the other students of his year in January, 1825, and secured a creditable place in what is called the "Poll."

SUTTON COURTNEY CHURCH.

He had a remarkable natural talent for arithmetic, " and I have heard him say," writes my father, " that he answered all the arithmetical questions almost as fast as they were brought to him by the examiners."* " In after life, however, he did not display any great acquaintance with academic lore." In the following summer, that he might be able to satisfy some episcopal examining chaplain, though which he as yet knew not, he went to study divinity under a private tutor at Charlton Kings, near Cheltenham, and while there formed an acquaintance, which was pregnant for him with important issues. He contracted, in fact, an intimate friendship with Edward Coleridge, of an old Somersetshire family, who soon after became an Eton master, and a son-in-law of Dr. Keate, the famous castigator, but also, as it happened, a Canon of Windsor.

It was through this acquaintance that William Tiptaft was selected as his curate at Treborough, Somerset, by Archdeacon Trevelyan, whose brother, Sir John, had a beautiful seat and large estates in the neighbourhood. Having satisfied the examining Chaplain as to his " virtuous and pious life " and also as to his " learning and knowledge in the Holy Scriptures " (I quote from the usual certificate) he was ordained by the Bishop of Bath and Wells at the beautiful cathedral of Wells in March, 1826. Treborough is only a small village of some 130 souls, and here William Tiptaft remained until the beginning of 1828, and here, according to his own account, his soul was quickened in January, 1827. Meanwhile he had so thoroughly satisfied his superior, that he was thought to have earned a more responsible position. In January, 1828, accordingly, Archdeacon Trevelyan passed him on to his own son, the Vicar of the adjacent, but much larger parish of Stogumber, with a population of nearly a thousand, and a name which, long known to the West Country for its ales, has lately been rendered familiar to many by the genius of Mr. Bernard Shaw. Here, too, as in Treborough, he seems to have won golden opinions on account of his zeal, his earnestness and his devotion to the cause of the poor.

" I have always thought," writes my father, " that his distinguishing feature, through the whole of his spiritual life, was the fear of God, manifesting itself in a most self-denying, upright, practical walk and conduct. Others might have greater natural abilities and more shining pulpit gifts; but where shall we find one, either minister or private Christian, who, from the beginning to the end of his profession, lived and walked like him? Truly in him 'the fear of the Lord was a fountain of life to depart from the snares of death.' This fear, as the beginning of wisdom, was implanted in his soul when he was at Treborough, and, if at first not very deep, was genuine. Its first effect was to separate him from the world, to lead him to solitude and reflection, and give him an earnestness and seriousness of character which were in striking contrast with the lightness and frivolity of his college life. Its second effect was to set him to work; and, as he had now a large parish, it gave him an ampler field. Feeling his hands on the stilts of the plough, looking on the congregation as specially entrusted to him to plough it and make it bear a crop for God, and animated by a fresh and new stimulus, he drove it strongly and firmly through the thick clods.

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* Thanks to his wonderful memory he was, I have been told, in his younger days a very fine whist-player, and when he and his handsome cousin, my great-aunt, Rebecca Keal, were partners, they were almost sure to win. She was eventually converted by him and remained until the end of a long life a very consistent and much respected Christian.

"As regards his own experience at this time. I never heard him speak much of it beyond these two things: 1. The separation of spirit which he felt from the world; and 2. the earnestness with which he read religious books, and especially any prayers which he could procure. The reason, I think, of this latter point was that he found in them his feelings and desires put into words, and thus felt an echo to them in his own bosom."

Meanwhile he had become on very friendly and intimate terms with Edward Coleridge and his newly-married wife, during their visits into Somersetshire, and one day in mid-winter, 1829, he unexpectedly received the following letter:

"Eton College,
Jan. 22, 1829."

"My dear Tiptaft,—I find, on my arrival here from Dr. Keate's, that the living of Sutton Courtney, near Abingdon, is to be given away in about ten days or so by the Canons of Windsor. They are anxious to give it to a good man; and if you like the account herein contained of it, I think I could insure it you. Three thousand souls to take care of; a good, but not a very large house, value from £120 to £150 per annum. If you think it worth your notice, write immediately a letter, with what testimonials you can collect, to the Hon. and very Rev. the Dean and Canons of Windsor, soliciting it, and I will take care that it is backed up.

In great haste, yours very heartily,
EDWARD COLERIDGE."

As he had for some time been anxious to exchange his curacy for a position of greater authority and independence, he at once bestirred himself to obtain the requisite testimonials.

"As deans and chapters," to quote from the *Memoir*, "have always plenty of eager applicants for any vacant place of preferment which they may have to give away, and amongst them sons-in-law, nephews, cousins, and a whole tribe of poor relations in the curate line, almost without end, it seems a singular, and, indeed, a marked incident in providence, that they should have in this case departed from their usual course, and entertained some care for the parish instead of thinking only of their hungry candidates. They wanted a man, if not with a soul above lucre, yet with a pocket above it—one who would do the parish some good, instead of the parish doing it all to him. All honour to the dean and canons for this considerable thoughtfulness. They little foresaw, however, on whom they were about to confer their living, and what secret designs of providence were wrapped up in their anxiety to give it to a good man—good according to their sense of the word, which so far was honest and sincere. Our friend, however, at once set himself to procure the requisite testimonials to character and qualifications; and as these were of a superior kind, and were signed by such influential persons as Archdeacon Trevelyan, and, I believe, Archdeacon Law, they would necessarily carry with them much weight and authority. Considerable delay, however, had taken place, and so late were they in being sent that but for a singular and providential circumstance the living would have been disposed of before they arrived." This is graphically told in the following letter from Mrs. Coleridge:

"My dear Sir,—By this same post you will probably receive a letter from the chapter-clerk of Windsor, informing you that you are vicar of Sutton Courtney, as which we hail you most cordially, and sincerely hope that we shall not have been the means of removing you from your present abode of peace and happiness to one of trouble and annoyance. There are very few persons whom we should ever have thought of proposing for such an arduous and unprofitable piece of preferment; but we know your peculiar turn for parochial duties, that you wished for something to call your own, and had the good fortune of being so situated with regard to pecuniary affairs as not to make the value of the living a great object.

"The dean and chapter of Windsor were glad to hear of you, as all the candidates they have had have been a few distressed men, who only wished for the living for the sake of the emolument (little as it is), and would never have had the means of doing good in the parish, if even they had the inclination. My husband is so entirely occupied with his own duties to-day that it would have been quite impossible for him to write before post-time; he, therefore, hopes you will accept his congratulations through me, and believe that his own silence is quite unavoidable. You owe your getting the living merely to a lucky chance, for the chapter met at twelve o'clock this morning to give away the living, and no testimonials had then arrived from you, so that we knew not whether you had changed your mind about the thing or not. (Why were you not wise enough to write by the post to say you had sent them?) When twelve o'clock came and nothing had yet arrived, we gave the thing up in despair, and my father went up to Windsor quite disappointed; but at half-past one your packet appeared, and though we knew it was then almost hopeless, we sent a man up to Windsor with it, post-haste, and most fortunately it arrived when they were just in the midst of their debate, which would have been over long before had they not, by the greatest good luck in the world, been detained an hour in rectifying some mistake in a lease, which they had first to sign.

"My father desires me to tell you that you must be instituted and inducted before the 26th of this month, but that you are not required to come here unless you like it, as they will send you the presentation, and all your business is with the bishop.

"You must write immediately to say what is your university rank, as they know not whether to enter you in the presentation as M.A. or B.A.

"If you should deem it proper to come on to Windsor, we shall be delighted to see you. In the meantime, believe me to remain,
Ever yours sincerely,
"Eton, Tuesday, Feb. 3rd, 1829. MARY COLERIDGE."

"On what minute points," again to quote my father, "do the most important matters sometimes hang! But for the delay caused by the examination of lease, W. Tiptaft would not have been vicar of Sutton Courtney, or been brought into that neighbourhood where his labours were to be so abundantly blessed. Humanly speaking, I myself should never have known him, never enjoyed the benefit of his friendship, counsel, or example; and, as much of my life for many years has been connected with my intimacy with him, an important link would have been wanting in my own chain of Providence.

"Before he left Stogumber he preached a farewell sermon, from 1 Sam. xii. 23, 24, which he afterwards published, at the request of his parishioners. As far as I can remember, for it is some years since I read it, there is nothing particular in it beyond a general tone of sincerity and earnestness. I have no doubt that he was exceedingly popular at Stogumber, and his leaving it was much regretted, especially by the poor. All who knew him will, I believe, agree with me that one of the most marked features of his character was the sympathy he felt with the poor, and the thoroughness with which he identified himself with their feelings, views and interests. In this point I never saw in his rank of life, I will not say his equal, but any one who in the least approached him. He was eminently the poor man's friend, not in a condescending, patronising way, as if he were out of mere kindness lowering himself, or doing them an honour by friendly intercourse, but as one with them, if not in station, yet in sympathy and feeling. And I must do his poorer friends the credit of bearing my testimony that I never, or, at least, very rarely, knew any who took advantage of his kindness to treat him with disrespect or undue familiarity. Though free, he was never familiar; and thus each party preserved his place, avoiding, by mutual respect, those liberties which so often break up close intimacy."

William Tiptaft was "instituted and inducted" to his new living in February, 1829, and soon took up his quarters at the Vicarage, a pleasant, comfortable house, which since it was, for all he knew, to be his permanent abode, "he furnished very suitably and nicely."

At that date, before Didcot Junction had planted itself in the vicinity, Sutton Courtney might be described as sunk in the depths of the country. It had, however, a quiet life of its own.

Abingdon, its market town, was only two miles distant, a paper-mill gave employment to many hands, and in those days of barge-traffic it was a fairly busy distributing centre. It consisted, and still consists, of one wide straggling street bearing away south from the river, with vicarage and Church a little way down on the left and, at the end, embowered in trees, the ancient Manor-house, once an appanage of the big Monastery at Abingdon. All around lies the fruitful vale of Berks with its many scattered villages.

Such was Sutton Courtney when William Tiptaft first went to live there. Now it lies with crumbling wharves and derelict mill, above the loveliest of backwaters, but quite away from the navigable stream, so that the tripper, as he hurries, or is hurried, through Culham Cut, little dreams what a haunt of ancient peace and beauty he is missing. I have often landed there when staying on the river and never without a feeling that I was treading holy ground. For William Tiptaft was of the stuff whereof saints and martyrs are made, and in less tolerant days he too, I doubt not, would have gone smiling to the stake for what he knew to be the truth.

He and my father did not meet again until the summer of 1829 was on the wane. In the interval William Tiptaft had himself been passed through the furnace and had learnt to know the " pangs of despised love." For some weeks he had been deeply attached to a very amiable and devout young lady, the eldest daughter of a highly respected clergyman in the neighbourhood and a leading member of the Clerical Meeting. It was an engagement of the most serious, in which, we are told, courtship was conducted and kisses, if any, exchanged across an open Bible. And there seemed nothing to prevent the lady from soon transferring herself and her attractions to the newly-furnished vicarage. But since that fateful conversation with my father in the garden, the young lover's views on the particularity of redemption showed signs of becoming too extreme for the lady's approval. There was a warm altercation, followed by a letter of dismissal. The father tried to accommodate the difference, but the daughter remained adamant. While smarting under this rebuff and earnestly praying for light, the text which tells how " Lydia, a seller of purple in the city of Thyatira," had her heart so opened by the Lord " that she attended to the things which were spoken of Paul " (Acts xvi. 14) was applied with such force to the rejected lover's heart and conscience, that all further doubt as to the truth of the "hard" doctrine, which had come between him and his earthly felicity, was swept from his mind. "I know it is a hard doctrine to receive," he admitted years later, "and I feel risings in my own mind against it. But when fully received in the heart, as the 17th Article describes it, it is a blessed doctrine."

Subsequently the lady married the incumbent of a good living in the neighbourhood, and once, we learn, as William Tiptaft, no longer the respected vicar of Sutton Courtney but a discredited itinerant preacher, was tramping along the road on foot to hold a service in some village barn, she and her husband drove past him in their carriage. But whether, comments my father, like Michal, she despised him in her heart, or thought with a sigh of days gone past, is matter for conjecture. William Tiptaft never fell in love again, or if so, 'twas, like Francis of Assisi, with Madam Poverty. She did not despise his love. For her he beggared himself, and died at last in her arms, his last field sold. For once he had left the Church, William Tiptaft never consented to take a farthing for all his labours in his Master's cause, and had to fall back toward the last on the charity, or, rather let me say, on the eager benevolence of devoted friends.

The narrative shall now be continued in my father's words, written, it must be remembered, after William Tiptaft's death, more than sixty years ago.

"Those who knew William Tiptaft know that in the things of God no minister in our day feared man less, or desired to fear God more. His boldness and decision, where he knew and felt himself to be right, were some of the strongest marks of his character. Immediately, therefore, that his eyes were open to see, and his heart touched to believe and receive the grand and glorious truths of the gospel, and especially the fundamental doctrine of election, as he was full of zeal and earnestness, of a most bold, undaunted spirit, and counted the smiles of men as dust in the balance compared with the favour of God, he began to proclaim from the pulpit salvation by sovereign grace. He had at that time a voice of singular loudness and power, and his language was so plain, clear and pointed, his delivery so warm and earnest, and he so beat down salvation by works, and so set up salvation by grace, that a mighty stir soon began to be made in the neighbourhood. His church, which was a very large one, was completely thronged with hearers from all the surrounding parishes, and the zeal, warmth and earnestness with which he preached, new as it was to the people, sent, as it were, an electric shock through his congregation. About this time, as I had returned to Stadhampton, and he knew that my views were in full accordance with those which he had just embraced, he wrote me a note to ask me to come over and preach for him on a week evening, as he had recently set up a week-evening service, and I was, from my own engagements, unable to come for a Lord's Day. Not having heard of the revolution which had taken place in his views and feelings, I was struck with the change in his language from the usual cold, stereotyped, evangelical form (as, for instance, the expression of his desire that 'if I came, the Holy Spirit would enable me to preach such truth as God might bless to His people'), and accepted his invitation.

"It was about the end of the summer of that year, 1829, and, as we went into the churchyard, it was surprising to see the number of people coming along the various roads, or standing in groups waiting for the service to commence. The church soon became so filled that there was scarcely standing-room in the aisles. And of whom was the congregation made up? Almost wholly of poor men and women. Labourers were there in their smock-frocks and week-day clothes almost as if they had just come out of the fields, poor women in their cotton shawls, with a sprinkling of better-dressed people in the pews; but a thorough plain and rustic assembly had gathered together to hear a sermon on the week-day evening—an event which had not probably occurred in that church or neighbourhood since the days of the Puritans.

"He read the prayers, and especially the lesson, which was a chapter out of the epistles, with all that loudness of voice, emphasis of accent, and earnestness of manner which were always such a marked feature in him, and it seemed to thrill the whole congregation, as he roused up the sleeping echoes of the old church walls as they probably had never been roused up before.

"I shall pass by myself and my sermon, which, if I remember right, was from Isa. xlv. 24: 'Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength,'' enabling me to show in whom were stored our righteousness and our strength, and that both were in Christ, and neither of them in ourselves. Though now so many years ago, I still retain some remembrance, not only

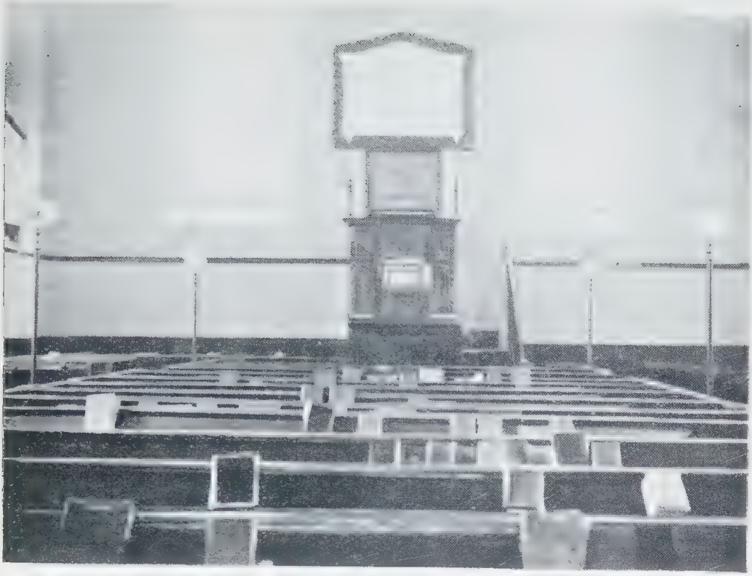
ABINGDON GREAT CHURCH.

of my text, but of my manner of handling it, and of the way in which I was listened to by the large congregation. As I was young in the ways and things of God, my sermon, doubtless, was neither very deep nor experimental, but I think it was a faithful exposition of the truth as far as I knew it, and most probably suited such a mixed congregation better than such a discourse as would meet my more matured judgment now.

"I slept at his house and stayed a day or two with him, during which we had much conversation on the things of God. The change in him was certainly most remarkable, and seemed to have revolutionised, as it were, his very being. He spoke and acted as one brought into a new world. The things of God were his meat and drink. The Bible, which he had not much read, now became his only book, and the doctrines of grace which he had looked on with shyness, if not fear, were uppermost in his heart and on his tongue. He never was a man to do things by halves, or calculate on consequences, I mean worldly or pecuniary consequences. If he believed a thing to be right, he did it; if wrong, no consideration could induce him to violate his conscience. If he believed a doctrine to be true, he preached it; if false, he denounced it. This made his path very clear, but one in which few can walk; for as it required strong convictions of the certainty of truth at first to attain it, so it demanded great courage, much singleness of eye, constant self-denial, and a patient bearing of the cross, which few can submit to, continually to maintain it. In some degree it was a great help to him that he had come into a new neighbourhood where he had formed no binding connections, was an incumbent, and not a curate, and thus, to a great extent, free from control by the bishop, was possessed of some personal property, and had neither wife nor children dependent on him. All these circumstances gave him a freedom of action and an independence of mind and movement which few ministers in the Church of England possess.

"But, pursuing his history, I have now to narrate an event which made at the time a considerable stir, and was indeed the chief means of bringing him out of his comparative obscurity. A Mr. West, a retired medical practitioner, who had formerly practised at Abingdon, at this time resided at Sutton Courtney, and, as it appeared, was so wrought upon by the word preached from the pulpit, and enforced by private conversation, as to embrace with zeal and warmth the doctrines of grace. It had been for many years the custom for a sermon to be preached in St. Helen's, commonly called, from its size, 'the great Church,' Abingdon, on the evening of Christmas Day, before the mayor and corporation; and as a large congregation was usually assembled, some preacher was generally chosen who it was thought could suitably address them. Chiefly through Mr. West's influence, who was or had been a member of the corporation, and partly, also, as a new incumbent in the neighbourhood, the vicar of Sutton Courtney was appointed to preach it. Boldness and faithfulness, as we well know, were his marked characteristics as a preacher; but at that time these features in his character were not much known beyond the circle of his hearers at Sutton. Nothing daunted, however, by the presence of the vicar of the parish, most of the clergy of the town, and the mayor and corporation in all the dignity of mace and robes, he got into the pulpit after the vicar had, I believe, read the prayers, and to a congregation crowded in every part of one of the largest parish churches in England, delivered with all the effect of his clear, loud and ringing voice, the now well-known sermon from Matt. i. 21: 'And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS; for he shall save his people from their sins.'

"Never, perhaps, did a sermon commence with a more striking opening: 'I stand before you this evening as the servant of Christ, or the servant of the devil.' Its effect was electric, and many remember to this day (1867), the sensation it produced on the congregation, especially the clerical and worldly part of it. Having thus opened the way, he went boldly on, and in a most plain and simple yet clear and forcible manner, brought out one by one the grand doctrines of sovereign, distinguishing grace, proving every point as he advanced it by passages from Scripture, brought together with great aptness of selection, and not too numerous or too long. The sermon, it is true, is not very deep or experimental, and yet there is such a tone of sincerity, and such warmth and life running through it, that I have thought sometimes that it was one of the best that he ever preached. Its effect was undeniable, both at the time and afterwards, for its bold, decisive statements produced such a commotion in the town of Abingdon as is rarely witnessed. Indeed, the stir that it made was so great that the enemies of truth determined to do something to allay it, and in consequence the master of the grammar-school, a clergyman of the name of Hewlett, who was present at the



WILLIAM TIPTAFT'S CHAPEL
(With Memorial Tablet above Pulpit).

"NICODEMUS PASSAGE."

sermon, was put the next Lord's day into the same pulpit—he being, as it was thought, a man of some ability, to answer it. This was not only contrary to the discipline of the Church of England, which forbids, under the name of 'brawling,' an attack upon a previous sermon in the same pulpit, but was also an unfavourable selection for their own party, as he was but a poor reasoner even on his own side of the question, and was better known as a boon companion at corporation dinners, and an excellent whist player at the card table, than as a deep theologian, or acute divine. Indeed, many of his own party were ashamed of their champion as the selected advocate of their religious views and opinions, and were surprised at seeing them entrusted to his hands. As was to be fully expected, he both misunderstood and misrepresented the doctrines advocated in the sermon which he had heard, and misquoted from memory some of its expressions; among them, if I remember right, that the preacher had called his congregation 'a bundle of filthy rags.' These misrepresentations (for he had the assurance to publish his discourse soon after its delivery), the general excitement produced by the original sermon, and the public attack made upon it, combined with the earnest desires expressed by many of his own congregation that he would publish his discourse, induced our friend to send it to the Press."

When William Tiptaft preached his startling sermon, St. Helen's had not yet been restored. It was still encumbered with large galleries, the organ was over the West door, and the pulpit, a handsome "three-decker," dating from 1632, stood in the very middle of the church with the seats all facing it. Immediately below it were the pews especially provided by the Mayor and Corporation for their own use on ceremonial occasions. These now face the altar, but the socket for the municipal mace is still there between its prancing heraldic supporters. The upper part of the old pulpit is happily in present use, and on it are carved these admonitory words in Latin: AD HAEC QUIS IDONEUS (To this office what mortal man is equal ?)—a warning which might easily intimidate any preacher less assured of the divine support than was the young Vicar of Sutton Courtney on that Christmas-day a hundred years ago.

VII. WILLIAM TIPTAFT'S LETTERS.

From this point onward for the next few critical years, the story of William Tiptaft's intimate life will be found most graphically recorded in that series of letters which my father selected for publication from a mass of others, on the ground that they afford "a continuous history for many years of his outward and inward life, stamped with a peculiar freedom and a weight of practical counsel and admonition flowing from his personal relationship." They were, in fact, addressed as much to his dear elder sister, Deborah (my grandmother), as to W. T. Keal, her husband, who, from the moment that they awoke to their value—and my only regret is that they did not awake to it sooner—most providentially preserved them, and eventually had them copied into a book for circulation among their friends. My father incorporated them in his *Memoir of William Tiptaft* (1867) and they were published, through no fault of his, in a cheap and none too legible edition, which was hardly worthy of them. In his Preface he admits that until he had read them in proof he did not realise how "truly excellent and weighty" they were. Nor, to tell the truth, did I, nor will anyone, I think, who does not take the trouble to read them again and again. Their effect is cumulative, they grow upon one; for their one outstanding virtue is their absolute sincerity, in itself emphatically a spiritual gift, without which no written word can hope to survive. I challenge anyone to find in them a word of cant, if by cant is meant saying more than one honestly and truly feels, and exaggerating one's emotions for effect. William Tiptaft has no *arrière pensée*, no privy axe to grind, except to convince my grandparents, as eventually he did, of the truth, the saving value and the essential rightness of his views. In these letters you will find nothing clever, showy or profound, though often much simple wisdom condensed into a striking phrase. And, like his sermons, they harp pretty continually on a single string. "The head travels faster than the heart," was one of his pithy sayings, by which I think he meant, that the heart has not the same craving as the head—the Athenian passion—for novelty and change. It does not tire so readily of the good old tunes. But to move the heart, whether by way of prose, or verse, or music, a thing must have come from the heart, as William Tiptaft's Letters most assuredly did.

Containing, as they do, expressions which he might not, perhaps, have used in his later and wiser days, they unfold a story of amazing psychological interest, a fascinating record of spiritual growth and spiritual conflict. William Tiptaft has not only his own soul to keep alive, a thing he finds increasingly difficult as time goes on without help from on High, but to bring round my grandparents to his own particular view as to the narrow way of salvation, his own vision of eternal truth, his own determined separation from the world and all its vanities, his own contempt for wealth, ease and comfort, his own unstinted generosity to the poor. On this point, to apply to him a phrase once used of a very different person, he was "alieni appetens, sui profusus," as desirous of other people's money in the interests of the poor, as for their sake he was almost unwisely lavish with his own.

We shall see him going forth on tour into the West of England, full of confidence and youthful ardour, to call men to Christ, adjuring them solemnly, that "as all He did was for us, so all we do ought to be for Him," soon coming up against the world's stolid indifference, unbelief and self-complacency, and finding by bitter and repeated experience how few even among the righteous really lived up to the faith they so loudly professed. Then we shall see him gradually compelled by a burdened conscience to give up his comfortable home and his honoured place in the world, in order that he may the more closely follow his Master into a life of self-denial and disrepute.

The years pass, and as his early "much assurance" and self-confidence begin to give way, the struggle within his own soul increases. From Letter XXXI onward a new note is heard. He is "tried in his soul in various ways." He feels himself "so unfit for a pastor." His "preaching tries him very much." It is a terrible task "to stand up between an ever-living God and never-dying souls." "All things are very puzzling and no one more than myself to myself; for I am a mystery indeed." "I am driven into corners and often wonder where the scene will end." As with other extraverts, when he begins to be introspective, his difficulties become too great for his powers of adjustment. And yet he goes on, year after year, touring the country, wherever he can find a pulpit or a barn to preach in, as if, to quote the verdict of an observant friend, his constitution had been of oak, and not, as it really was, of deal.

At last the overdriven body rises up in fierce rebellion against the soul. Unbearable pains assail him, and drive him from the field. His splanchnic plexus, the knot of sensitive nerves at the pit of the stomach, gives him no peace. He has to take refuge with my grandparents, there to be nursed, if possible, back to health. The months drag past and the fear is that he will die, "gradually sink," to quote my father, who was witness of his misery, "worn out by his complaint and the toils and labours of his past ministry." As he was staying at Oakham during this time there is a long gap between Letters XLV and XLVI, and a veil is mercifully drawn for us over his suffering.

The year and more of bodily rest has given the soul a chance of regaining its mastery, but it is a chastened soul, which never quite regains its old assurance. "He had been brought down from the mount," again to quote my father, "that he might learn experimentally to walk in the valley of humiliation where the best taught and most deeply led of the Lord's living family are usually found."

After that there is another long gap in the correspondence. For now that my grandparents have definitely ranged themselves on his side, there is the less need to admonish them; nay, it is he himself who now stands most in need of encouragement. In spite of much darkness of mind and bondage of spirit, he has to resume his preaching. He has put his hand to the plough and cannot, dare not look back. He has moments of comfort and relief, when he is able, blessedly, to feel that the Lord is on his side. But on the whole the four years that follow his illness are years of trial and perplexity. Then, when least looked for, there comes a marvellous deliverance, and the long series of letters ends in a splendid song of praise. (See Letter XLIX.)

This little intimate drama of a few obscure souls doing their best by God's grace to bring their lives into harmony with the Eternal Verities takes place against the background of a world in the throes of change. Revolution abroad, the Reform Bill at home, the Emancipation of the Catholics, "the daily expectation of the spreading of the cholera," the state and fate of the Established Church, are all weighing on men's minds, so that to timid souls it seemed, in the dejected words of a contemporary, "as if the whole fabric of English and, indeed, of European society was trembling to the foundations." "Men's hearts may be said to be failing them," writes William Tiptaft on November 16, 1831 (Letter XVII), "for fear of what is coming upon the earth. But God's people are safe." Yes. While the Eternal Verities will always be there for those who value them, the century that has since passed has witnessed a revolution in our habits of life and ways of thought, which, could they have been plunged into the thick of it, would, I think, have driven our grandparents out of their minds. And the seeds were being sown at the very time of which I write. In that autumn of 1831, while from his retreat at Walmer my father was doing his best to dissuade William Tiptaft from abruptly resigning his living; while at Oxford Richard Hurrell Froude was persuading J. H. Newman that Calvinism failed to explain the facts; while in London Edward Irving's growing extravagances were alienating his best friends; while all these things were happening in the contemporary world, Michael Faraday, the Sandemanian, had just clinched the marvellous research—the date is August 29, 1831—which was to turn electricity from a lecture-room toy into at once the comfort and the torment of our lives; at Devonport, H.M.S. *Beagle* was being fitted out for her historic voyage; and at Bishopthorpe Sir David Brewster was helping Archbishop Vernon Harcourt to found the British Association. Though William Tiptaft would have cared for none of these things, his letters will at least throw light on to a vanished world before leisureliness had been sent into exile.

No one would claim that our hero, if such we may call him, was either a scholar or a deep thinker, but for an extravert he had a remarkable knowledge of his own heart, and a store of homely wisdom, which coined itself into pithy sayings and rather recondite biblical allusions, some of which I have torn from their context to serve as headings for his Letters. He is himself "the troubler of Israel"; my grandparents, if they follow his precepts, will soon be looked upon as "speckled birds." Among his aphorisms will be noticed, "The head travels faster than the heart." "The best of men is a man at the best." "Bodily comforts and spiritual consolations seldom go together." "The blood of souls stains deep." "People expect to go to heaven in silver slippers and with the wind at their backs," etc.

This brief "guide" to the Letters will be found admirably supplemented by the personal narrative with which my father first introduced them to the English reader. There is mention of his name, it will be noticed, in Letters VIII, IX, X, and XI, when he was a guest at Sutton Courtney Vicarage, and also in XXX and XXXV. But we have a much fuller account of that visit from his own pen, as well as a striking testimony to the vivid impression which William Tiptaft made both upon himself, and upon others, during the last year that he remained in the Church of England.

To the fifty letters in the original collection, I have added two more, viz., one describing his signal deliverance thirteen years after the event, and the last letter he ever wrote to my father, only five weeks before his lamented death in August, 1864.

The occasional allusions in Letters XXXV to XLIX to poor Kay, John Kay, I.K., call for a brief explanation, referring, as they do, to what my father has called "the greatest act of noble liberality and unwearied self-denial which even with all his sacrifices my friend ever made."

You have yet to hear how, when my father fell gravely ill in his lodgings at Stadhampton in September, 1830, and recovery seemed long delayed, William Tiptaft carried him off to his own comfortable vicarage and kept him there all the winter, waiting upon him like a brother. But that was nothing compared with the long self-imposed ordeal, of which I have now to tell.

Early in 1834 an almost penniless, rather feckless, and absolutely friendless young clergyman, named John Kay, who had been supported at College and up to his ordination by his elder brother, an Oxford Fellow, having for reasons of conscience resigned his curacy, seceded from the Church of England, and been in consequence cast-off by all his relations, directed his steps to Abingdon, owing chiefly to what he had heard of William Tiptaft in the Kettering district, where his curacy had lain. Having listened to his story and been convinced that he had been guided in his steps by the power of God, William Tiptaft, to save the helpless youth from the workhouse, paid his few debts, and offered him a small upper bedroom in the house where he himself was lodged. John Kay, with no other friend in the world to look to, except a rich, but eccentric old uncle who would do nothing for him, had no alternative but to accept this kind and generous offer, although neither could have then foreseen how long the temporary arrangement would last.

"Though about two years later," writes my father, "William Tiptaft moved into a somewhat better house, yet, beside the two bedrooms, he had but one sitting-room; and to share that year after year with one who had no claim upon him, but that of

Christian brotherhood, was, I need not say, a sacrifice of his own comfort and privacy, such as no man but he, I believe, would or could have rendered. John Kay was a truly good man, and of a very amiable Christian spirit, but in many ways very eccentric, and being much afflicted in body was almost an invalid, and therefore trying always to live with. But for fourteen long years our friend lodged him, fed him, clothed him, and was to him indeed a father, a brother and a friend. It is true that some friends helped somewhat to bear with him the pecuniary expense, but all the load of having him continually in the same room was borne by his entertainer. Indeed, I think, had he not often gone out on his various preaching tours, and had not friends occasionally invited John Kay to pay them a visit, he himself with all his wonderful patience and kindness could scarcely have sustained it. . . William Tiptaft was social naturally, and yet I know he much prized solitude and quiet and often spoke of them as profitable to his soul. John Kay was a pleasant and profitable companion, and by no means deficient in understanding or information. But men are but men, and to be always together should be angels, or glorified spirits, rather than fallen sons of Adam. For fourteen years, however, did William Tiptaft bear this load with a sinking income, and little prospect of any change.

" But in 1848 John Kay's uncle died and left him a handsome legacy. This unexpected interference of the providence of God at once liberated our friend from his long, yet patiently endured burden, enabled the two friends to live apart, and restored to William Tiptaft his cherished privacy of life."

John Kay, it must be admitted, did what little he could to repay in some measure his host. We shall find him acting sometimes as a stop-gap at Abingdon when William Tiptaft was laid aside or unable to preach. And, though in his friend's opinion, he would never be able to hold a body of people together, we hear of him occasionally filling the pulpit at Allington (Letter 29). Also in the early days of the *Gospel Standard*, when sufficient copy was sometimes hard to come by, he contributed some rather involved and rambling articles. Eventually he married, and departed this life at Abingdon, May 27, 1860, deeply mourned by his faithful friend, whose body only four years later was to find a resting-place in the same grave-yard.

VIII. FROM CHURCH TO CHAPEL.

And now we must go back to the Reverend William Tiptaft, the young Vicar of Sutton Courtney.

"Though nearly thirty-seven years have now rolled by since that period," writes my father in 1867, "many can still remember the amazing stir, I may say, startling effect produced by his ministry. The cold, dead, lifeless, humdrum service of most parish churches is acknowledged even by many church-goers, and at that period Ritualism, as it is now termed, or Puseyism, had not yet made its appearance, a little to galvanise them into a false life. There was nothing, therefore, to rouse or excite a sleepy parish or a lifeless congregation beyond the church bells or a musical choir. It was so at Sutton Courtney, which, like the rest, slept its sleep of death, until the change took place which is so obvious from his letters in the views and preaching of the new incumbent.

"The parish church of Sutton Courtney is a large building, and, besides the accommodation afforded by the old-fashioned square pews, is capable of holding a considerable congregation in its wide aisles and out-of-the-way corners. The new doctrines which he preached, in themselves so startling; the energy and power with which he enforced them; the great plainness and simplicity of language with which he clothed them—he being emphatically a poor man's preacher; his home-thrusts at besetting sins, of the poor as well as the rich; his clear, loud voice sounding through every part of the building; his bold fearlessness in hewing down error, especially Arminianism and what is called free-will, in all its shades and grades; his own evident, unmistakable conviction that what he preached was the truth of God; and the consequent earnestness of his manner and delivery—all these combined together carried with them wonderful force.

"But besides the power which evidently rested on his ministry at this remarkable period of his life, there was everything in the man himself to win esteem and affection from the people who attended it. I never knew a man who manifested less of what is called pride, either in manner or in appearance. He had nothing of that stiff, starched, clerical, donnish air which we so often see in the clergy, nor of their patronising condescension and proud humility in their intercourse with their people. Indeed, it was not in him naturally, and he had not mixed long or intimately enough with clerical dons to acquire it. Then, as at every other period of his subsequent life, he desired to know no other distinction between man and man than such a difference as grace makes between them. A child of God was to him a child of God, and a child of the devil a child ot the devil, whether he were rich or poor, educated or uneducated, lived in a good house, or dwelt in a humble cottage. Indeed, knowing that God had chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, he attached himself particularly to them ; and they became his chief companions and friends. Very few of what is called the respectable part of his parish embraced his views, though at this time the lord oi the manor, Mr. West, whom I have already named, was most favourable to them, and advocated them with much warmth and zeal. He was also at this time, as all through his subsequent life, most kind and liberal in administering pecuniary relief to the poor and needy, and having few wants of his own, and possessing at that period a good income, kept almost open table for all in whom he could perceive the grace of God. The same divine hand which had opened his heart to believe and receive the truth, enlarged it to minister to the wants of the poor and needy of the family of God.

"He had, I must add, a most happy way of giving, and never seemed more what I may call himself, or better pleased, than in doing it. He generally carried his money loose in his waistcoat pocket, and rarely passed a beggar without giving him something. Indeed, at Abingdon, many years after this period of his life, as I have myself seen, he was continually as if waylaid by boys and poor people, who begged of him as he passed by, and rarely in vain. I write nothing about him but what I myself was personally witness of, as we frequently saw each other at this period ; and indeed I may add that I was almost the only clergyman in the neighbourhood who cleaved to him, for all his former evangelical friends were frightened at what they considered his new and extravagant views ; and he felt as much separated from them in spirit as they were from him now in person. But from the similarity of our views and feelings we seemed more closely drawn together, and as we lived only six or seven miles apart, often saw one another, he coming over to visit me, or I spending a day or two with him.

"But in the autumn of 1830, a circumstance brought us into closer habits of intimacy. In September it pleased the Lord to lay on me His afflicting hand. I had overworked myself in my parish, and having taken a severe cold, and increased it by going out one evening to my lecture at the school-room, was quite laid aside and unable to preach. My friend hearing of my illness came over to see me several times, and rendered me what help he could in my week lectures; but finding my health did not improve, kindly invited me to come and stay with him for a few weeks for change of air, as Sutton was drier and warmer than Stadhampton. This invitation I willingly accepted, and went to his house November 4, meaning to return home in a few weeks. He was, however, so kind and hospitable, and we got on so well together, that I was easily persuaded to remain with him the whole of the winter, especially as I still continued tender, not being able to leave the house all through December and January. During those winter months, nothing could exceed his affectionate kindness and attention, waiting upon me like a brother, bringing to me my breakfast in bed and afterwards assisting me to shave myself. We spent the morning alone in our own rooms, he giving up to me his airy and cheerful drawing-room; but in the evening we generally sat together, and either read the Bible, or conversed, I think I may say almost always, on something connected with the concerns of eternity; for I may add that it was a solemn period with me at that time, with many searchings of heart and prayers to the Lord as regarded my own state; for eternity was brought near, and I was made to see and feel, that nothing short of divine manifestations, and Christ revealed to the heart, could bear the soul up in the trying hour.

"At that period of his life he was singularly frank and free both naturally and spiritually, more so, perhaps, than afterwards, when from having been often deceived in men, he had become more cautious in expressing his thoughts and opinions; and as we were well agreed, for the most part, in divine things, I probably knew as much of his mind and past history, or perhaps more than, most of his friends and acquaintances.

"In the beginning of February, 1831, I was able to leave the house, and take a walk under a sunny wall where he would accompany me and suit his pace to mine; and as strength mercifully came with the advancing season, I was enabled to go to the church, and hear him preach. What a congregation he then had, and made up chiefly of poor people, and, what is not very usual, the men much preponderating in number over the women. This, however, may be easily accounted for by the distances whence they came, which of course the men were more easily enabled to accomplish. I do not think I had heard him preach before this, and therefore take the present opportunity of recording my impression of his ministry at this period of his life. I cannot say, then, that he had much of what is called eloquence of language, at least to an educated ear, if that mean sublimity of thought and beauty of expression ; but he had much of what Cecil defines true eloquence to be, 'vehement simplicity,' and, above all, that thorough conviction in his own heart of the truths which he preached with so much simple vehemence, and without which all eloquence is but theatrical oratory, and for the most part utterly powerless to either sinner or saint.

"About this time he became acquainted with a Mr. Bulteel, then curate of St. Ebb's parish in the city of Oxford. Mr. Bulteel had for some years embraced the doctrines of grace, and preached them with much fervour of mind and strength of expression. This was a new sound at the learned university, and a thing almost unheard of, that a Fellow and tutor of one of the Colleges, for such he was when he first began to preach, should embrace so thoroughly, and above all proclaim so boldly, the obnoxious doctrines of the Calvinistic creed. His church was crowded with hearers, and among them were seen many of the university students, and now and then a master of arts, myself being one of them, some of whom became his attached and regular hearers. As a master of arts (for every ordained master of arts preaches once, according to his turn, before the University), it fell to Mr. Bulteel early in 1830 to preach before that learned body ; and true to his principles he took for his text 1 Cor. ii. 12, from which he delivered a bold and faithful discourse, distinctly and clearly advocating the doctrines of grace. I need hardly say that to wake up the echoes of St. Mary's Church, and rouse from their calm repose the minds of proctors, doctors, heads of houses, learned professors, and the grand assembly of university dons, who, besides the general gathering of arts and the undergraduate students, form the congregation, by bold statements of Calvinistic doctrine was no slight task to accomplish. But Mr. Bulteel preached an able and faithful sermon, and though he contended strongly for free-grace, as opposed to free-will, yet kept clear of any offensive statements. The sermon, however, caused much sensation, and Mr. Bulteel felt himself called upon to publish it. This called forth a reply from Dr. Burton, the chaplain to the bishop, producing a controversy between them which made some little noise at the time, but which it is not worth while further to notice.*

"Of course all this deeply interested our friend, and led to a closer acquaintance with Mr. Bulteel, which soon began to bear fruit. They were both young and healthy, vigorous in mind and body, and full of zeal and warmth, which were roused instead of being damped by the general opposition made to their views and preaching. W. Tiptaft had not at that time that wisdom, discernment and caution which he manifested in after years: and as the doctrines of grace had taken such possession of his soul, his heart and house were alike open to all who advocated them, and were willing to make sacrifices for them. Mr. Bulteel was a Devonshire man and being of a good family had many connections and friends in that county. He therefore proposed to his friend that they should go down together on a kind of preaching excursion, not confining themselves to Church of England places of worship, but to proclaim the Gospel wherever a door might be opened in chapels, rooms, private houses, or the open air. Our friend's mind at that time had become much shaken about the Church of England, and this made him all the more willing to accompany Mr. Bulteel, and take a part with him. Indeed, I am not sure whether the original proposal did not emanate from him."

This preaching tour is so fully described in William Tiptaft's Letters (XIII and XIV), that it need not detain us.

The Bishop of Salisbury, his diocesan, though ready enough, as we shall see later on, to threaten him with prosecution after he had left the Church, now made no sign. But Henry Bulteel had his licence withdrawn by his Bishop, and, refusing to be silenced, after preaching for a time in his own garden, built himself a chapel behind Pembroke College, Oxford.

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* "Dr. Burton's reply to Bulteel," we read elsewhere, "had shown him to be excitable and not always able to command himself." Dr. Burton had succeeded Bishop Lloyd as Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford, but died in 1836, under circumstances which that genial gossip, the Rev. T. Mozley, to whom I owe the above quotation, thus relates: "Feeling not quite well, Dr. Burton went to Ewelme for a few days' rest, took a walk in the fields, met a dissenting farmer, who told him—(a Regius Professor of Divinity)—that he did not preach the gospel, had a warm argument with him, came home in a fever and died in a few days." (*Reminiscences*, Vol. I., p. 350.)

It is all rather pathetic, to read of these ardent, but inexperienced young enthusiasts going forth full of zeal to convert the world, soon coming up against the world's massive scepticism or indifference, and in the end falling back upon an obscure ministry to a handful of humble, but spiritually-minded souls. They learnt from their efforts at least as much as they taught. The lack of adequate response to their passionate appeals drove them more and more firmly to believe in the existence of a chosen and predestined people, disposing them, like the prophet of old, to attribute their failure to God's design. "Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes. and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them" (John xii. 39, 40). In some such strain do we find William Tiptaft writing when the first excitement of the tour was over, "We have found the spirit of the world reigning much wherever we have been. All seem to be seeking their own. There are very few that have grace enough to come out of a world lying in wickedness. The Dissenters generally are very worldly."

At one time he seems to have cherished the hope that many more clergy would follow him in the secession on which he was now almost resolved, and that the Church of England would totter to its fall.* In fact only a few months later Arnold of Rugby was to enunciate his well-known verdict, "The Church as it now stands no human power can save." But this would have brought small comfort to William Tiptaft, unless accompanied with a general religious revival. Disillusion followed on disillusion, till we find him exclaiming in despair, that true religion seemed nearly as scarce as snowballs in summer or roses at Christmas.

But his worst disappointment, in which my father also shared, a disappointment he could hardly bear to speak of, was the defection of his own familiar friend and fellow-labourer, on whom the meagre harvest of the tour had produced calamitous results (see Letter XX). As late as September, 1831, Bulteel had stayed with him, and preached in Abingdon market-place to two or three thousand people. Subsequently he had gone up to London, fallen under the spell of Edward Irving, then at the height of his popularity, and been persuaded not only that all men might be pardoned, but were already pardoned, and that Christ had only been kept from sin by the power of the Holy Spirit. "Such horrid doctrine," writes my father, "broke off all intercourse" between the former friends. Mr. Bulteel afterwards renounced his errors and confessed that he had been misled, but we hear no more of him. The rupture was complete.

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* According to my father, see *Secession from the Church of England Defended*," p. 8. (Seventh Edition, London, 1887), between forty and fifty ordained clergymen in various parts of England quitted the Established Church in the years 1830—1835.

In the meantime my father, having entrusted his parish to the "seasonable help" of the Rev. Charles Brenton, of whom we shall hear more anon, had left Sutton Courtney vicarage as soon as the spring was well advanced, in order to complete his convalescence in his mother's house at Walmer. Passing through London he consulted Sir William Knighton, the King's physician, who, having decided that he was suffering from "exhaustion of the vital energy," advised a full year's complete rest, a prescription which, as it turned out, was easier to order than to obey.

From this point onward the intimate story of the two friends is so fully recorded in their respective Letters, that even to summarize it would involve unnecessary repetition. It was characteristic of William Tiptaft that, as soon as he realized that he could not keep his living with a good conscience, he did not hesitate, but acted with promptitude. So that when my father was unexpectedly recalled to his parish at the end of 1831, his friend's secession was already six weeks old, and the walls of the chapel he had decided to build at Abingdon were nearly ready for the roof. He had received several offers to settle elsewhere, but had declined them all on the ground, that those who made them could afford to pay a minister, which his own poor peasants could not.

On November 10, 1831, he had thus begun a long and reasoned letter to the Bishop of Salisbury, his diocesan:

"I trust that you will not be displeased, because I do not address you with the high and usual appellation, when I assure you that I refrain from doing so with no personal disrespect to you, but for conscience' sake, as being expressly contrary to the plain and simple command of my Lord Jesus Christ. The subject of this letter is to me of great and serious importance, and has caused me much anxiety and consideration; but after frequent prayer to the Lord for His direction, I feel constrained to resign my living, as I cannot conscientiously discharge the duties thereof."

The bishop having accepted his resignation, William Tiptaft went up to London to complete the necessary formalities before a notary towards the end of November. On the last day of that month he published his Letter to the Bishop, and thought he had done with him. The Letter sold like wildfire. Three thousand copies were soon disposed of, and a new edition called for. In all nine editions were printed. Newspapers inserted it in full, and a bookseller published it without asking his leave. His indictment against the Church of England is formulated under fourteen objections, but since the case is put so much more forcibly by my father in his Letter to the Provost of Worcester College (see Letter No. 11), William Tiptaft's manifesto need not detain us. But two of his objections, it may be remarked, have since lost whatever validity they may have once possessed.

First, the Service in Commemoration of King Charles the Martyr—in itself a most able piece of ecclesiastical polemic—has been eliminated from the Prayer-book, and is now only a literary curiosity, like Bossuet's eloquent oration in honour of the Martyr's widow, both being striking illustrations of the way in which history can be falsified by priestly passion.

Secondly, his objection to the expression "Our most religious and gracious King," valid enough when the description applied to a son of George III, has happily now lost its main force.

The Chapel at Abingdon was ready for occupation and was to be formally opened on March 25, when William Tiptaft was astounded by the receipt of the following letter:

March 14, 1832.

Rev. Sir,

It has come to the knowledge of the Bishop of Salisbury that you are itinerating within his Lordship's diocese, preaching doctrines inconsistent with the principles of the Established Church, of which you have been ordained a member, in direct violation of the canons made for the governance of the ministers of that Church. I am therefore instructed by his Lordship to require you to desist from such practices within his Lordship's diocese, and to inform you, that if this requisition be not complied with, legal proceedings will be commenced against you.

I am, Rev. Sir,
Your very obedient servant,
J. L. Alford,
Proctor, Salisbury.

Rev. W. Tiptaft.

The reader, who may be presumed to know the sort of man that William Tiptaft was much better than the Bishop of Salisbury and his advisers appear to have done, will not be surprised at the uncompromising tenor of his rejoinder, dated March 19, 1832. It is too long to quote, but two sentences will give the gist of it.

1. " In the language of that honest servant, Micaiah, 'As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak ' " (1 Kings xxii. 14).

2. " If my great Master has a work for me to do in His vineyard, He will not allow all the powers in earth and hell to prevent it."

Still egged on by his advisers the Bishop affirms in his second letter of March 22, that resignation of a Church living does not operate as a renunciation of holy orders, or exonerate from the observance of the ecclesiastical law, as applicable to the clergy of the Church of England. And again he threatens " hostile measures."

On March 27, William Tiptaft again replies at length. Well aware that the Ecclesiastical Court is " the worst of all Courts and something like a porch to a prison," he repeats that he intends to preach as hitherto, until the Bishop, or others show him by the Word of God, that he is wrong in so doing. If the Bishop had any love and life in his soul, his treatment of him (William Tiptaft) would not be so *unlike* Paul's advice to Bishops Timothy and Titus, who had no Ecclesiastical Court nor Proctors.

The bishop now changes his ground and instead of threatening his late subordinate for preaching doctrines inconsistent with the principles of the Church of England, a position which it would have been difficult to establish, now arraigns him for preaching in unconsecrated places.

The letter is worth preserving, just as a thunderbolt that has gone astray, or an old posting blunderbuss, is exhibited under glass in a Museum. The bishop and his friends must have known that they were bluffing. Even a century ago a prosecution in the Ecclesiastical Court would have raised such a storm as they would not soon have heard the last of.

Sarum. April 2, 1832.

Rev. Sir,

I regret that I am obliged to repeat to you that you entirely misunderstood the tenor of my letters. It is not the desire of the Bishop of Salisbury to prosecute you on account of your religious opinions, but merely to prevent your violating the law by preaching in unconsecrated places within his lordship's diocese. I must repeat also, that you cannot by the aid of any authority legally or effectually renounce your orders, or your connection with the Church of England, and that consequently you are still, and will hereafter be, bound not to offend against the laws of that Church, notwithstanding your secession from it.

One of these laws is, that its ministers shall not preach in any other place than a consecrated Church or Chapel. You declare your intention to break that law. And the bishop, as your diocesan, admonishes you not to do so, and at the same time intimates to you, that if you persist in your determination, he will be compelled, in the exercise of his duty, to enforce your observance of that law by the usual proceedings.

I trust I have now been sufficiently explicit to prevent any future communications to the bishop of the character of your last two letters, both of which, I must take the liberty to say, are libellous, not only as they relate to his lordship individually, but also to the clergy of his lordship's diocese generally.

I am, Rev. Sir,

Your very obedient servant,

Rev. W. Tiptaft. J. L. ALFORD.

The only reply which William Tiptaft made to this communication was to publish it. Together with his original letter, his correspondence with the bishop, and a lengthy preface, it made up a nice little pamphlet which for several years enjoyed a considerable circulation, and is still, I believe, on sale. The Edition from which I quote is the Fourth, dated 1850. After that they left him severely alone. The bishop threw over his reckless advisers and fell back on the worldly-wise counsel of old Gamaliel.

In the meantime, until his chapel was ready for him, William

Tiptaft preached to overflowing congregations in a borrowed chapel at Sutton Courtney, and elsewhere in the neighbourhood. "I have been preaching in various places," he tells his brother-in-law, "and to large concourses of people. One of the effects of the Bishop's interference is that he has been an excellent trumpeter for me, and the newspapers, still continuing to make their remarks upon me, cause many to come and hear 'the babbler' out of curiosity." Some time later he heard in a roundabout way, that the bishop thought favourably and spoke well of him. "Nevertheless he remarked, that I had not spoken very gently of him" (Letter XXI).

So little is said in the Letters about the site and appearance of the chapel in which William Tiptaft ministered until his death more than thirty years later, that a brief account of a recent pilgrimage thither may not be unwelcome.

A sympathetic Oxford friend, to whom I had told the outlines of William Tiptaft's story, drove me first to Sutton Courtney, where we saw the vicarage from the outside, went into the Church with its fine Norman work, and lingered in the churchyard, where the late Lord Asquith has found rest from calumny and care. Our next halt was before the stately porch-door of St. Helen's, Abingdon, with its wonderful iron-work hinges. We entered the many-pillared five-aisled Church, as broad as it is long, and gazed with interest on all that is left of the old three-decker pulpit, from which by candle-light a hundred years ago, young William Tiptaft loudly called upon five thousand "miserable sinners" in aisles and galleries to repent and be converted. We inspected the seats of the mighty, the sacred municipal benches, and the socket for the municipal mace, guarded by its ramping bronze beasts. Then a friendly verger took us into the vestry, unlocked a moth-proof safe and showed us ancient treasures which had been laid up there for centuries.

Thence we walked to the Market-place, asked our way to the Abbey Chapel and were directed to an ancient archway standing in the shadow of a small, but still more ancient Church. Passing through the gateway, which once gave entrance to the oldest and proudest Benedictine Abbey in this country, and turning down a narrow cobbled lane on our right, we found ourselves in a sort of No-man's land of small cottages, back-gardens and cabbage-patches, across which one gazes up at all that is left of the ancient Abbey. It is as if its very foundations had been "sown with salt." Here, where the monks once throve in security and plenty, stands the modest red-brick Chapel which William Tiptaft sold an ancestral field to build. It rises to some height beyond the entrance passage, over which "Strict Baptist Chapel" had been newly painted, and a single-storey building with guarded windows, vestry or school-room. We could not get inside. The key was a mile away, and we were pressed for time. Happily, however, the Illustration will make amends.

While my friend was busy with his camera, a little old lady, her marketing-basket on her arm, stood by and watched. I addressed her. "Yes, that is Mr. Tiptaft's chapel," she replied. "He died when I was a babe in arms. He is to this day revered in Abingdon as the poor man's friend." "I wonder," said I, after we had been talking a while, "if you can show me which is Nicodemus passage, as they used to call it." For I had been told of a little back-way, by which those approached the chapel, who longed to hear the word of truth and yet were afraid to be seen passing through the Abbey Gateway. "The name is new to me, Sir," she replied, "but if you will come this way——" Then, as we followed her I saw that the cobbled lane did not end in cabbage-patches, as I had thought, but narrowed and, passing between dwarf crumbling walls, pierced a tall old gabled house most picturesquely out of repair, and led down by a few worn steps, at the foot of which just then an Italian ice-cream vendor was preparing his awninged barrow for his round, to a broad quay beside a mill-race, and thence to the famous old Abingdon Bridge.

We parted from our guide at the entrance to Nicodemus passage and made our way back to the Market-place. My friend was thoughtful.

"Of what does it remind you?" he asked at length.

I shook my head.

"Of Assisi and the Portiuncula, and the little Brother of the Poor," said he, with a hand on my sleeve.

"I was thinking," I answered, "how hard the Church and the World between them have always, always made it for a man to follow Christ."

"The greater the merit," said he.

"Merit!" I cried. "There is no merit. In that I am with William Tiptaft, and all who know what true religion, yea, or what true love means."

And so back to the beautiful city whose learned dust my father shook off from his youthful feet exactly a hundred years ago.

IX. A "TROUBLER OF ISRAEL."

We have now to retrace our steps a little and to accompany William Tiptaft, while still Vicar of Sutton Courtney, to his native Midlands, and to two quiet old market-towns a dozen miles apart, Oakham and Stamford, in each of which he had a married sister living, tall, handsome, prolific women to whom he was attached by every fibre of his celibate heart. Deborah Keal of Oakham, to whom, and to her husband, the present chapter will be mainly devoted, was by this time near the end of her child-bearing, the advent of her eighth and last infant being mentioned in Letter XII. But Eliza Cheselden Phillips,* the playmate of his childhood, and now the wife of a worthy and prosperous brewer of Stamford, was still in the midst of hers. There is a casual reference to her in connection with an amusing episode in Letter XXXV, but by that time she had already ceased to play any part in her brother's intimate life. For, though he never ceased to love her, nor she him, yet after she had heard him harangue a motley crowd in Stamford Assembly-rooms (see below) she said curtly, "William is mad," and returned to her crowded nursery, and to the child-bearing which was to be her undoing. Eleven little Phillipses she brought into the world in less than twenty-five years of married life, then died worn out, as her mother had done before her, at the early age of forty-seven. And in the fine old church of Saint Martin, Stamford Baron, where under his ornate canopy lies in effigy the great Lord Burghley, her sorrowing husband put up to her memory a costly painted window in the taste of the day. And if he did not at the same time send a handsome donation to the poor of Braunston, who had known and loved her as a girl, it was not William Tiptaft's fault, for I have seen the letters in which he urged it, adding, however, the characteristic proviso, that "it is always safer to take advice than to give it." In both letters he sends his love to his eleven motherless nephews and nieces, naming them all in the precise order in which they had come into the world, a testimony both to his wonderful memory and to the strength of his domestic affections.

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* The Tiptafts were proud of their connection with the Cheseldynes, or Cheseldens, formerly lords of Braunston manor, from whom sprang William Cheselden, a surgeon of European fame, and the friend of Addison and Pope. William Tiptaft was descended from one of this William Cheselden's sisters, and his distant cousin, Col. Fred Burnaby, of the *Ride to Khiva*, from another.

The eldest of these young nephews by the way, who inherited the pale face, fine aquiline features and generous disposition of the Tiptafts, was for many years a most beneficent power in Stamford and its vicinity, and the kindest friend I ever knew. The nieces I just remember as tall, fair, silken beauties; their bereaved father as a courtly old gentleman with reddish face and white choker. Great-grandsons of his and of Eliza Tiptaft's have not long left Eton. So wags the world!

It was in mid-September, 1830, as we learn from Letter VII, eighteen years, that is to say, before his younger sister's death, that William Tiptaft first journeyed down to Oakham, full of new-born zeal, to preach the everlasting Gospel to all who would deign to hear it. "I should say from what I myself know," writes my father, "and from what I have since heard of him about this period, that this was a signal time for the Lord's blessing to rest on his ministry. No doubt there was much excitement, which came to nothing, much false fire, which soon died down to ashes, in the crowds of people who flocked to hear him at the various places where he preached. And yet, as some are still alive (1867) to testify, and others have borne witness on their beds of death, many dead in sin were quickened at this period under his ministry into divine life. His occasional visits to Oakham, where he preached in a large building called the 'Riding School,' as having been constructed for that purpose by Sir Gerard Noel at the time of our war with France, were signally blessed, and were, indeed, the means of raising up a cause of truth in that town, through the instrumentality of Mr. Keal, who, with his wife, was constrained by the power of the word to leave about this time the Church of England, and cast their lot in with the despised family of God. His ministry at this period was of a peculiar nature, and very striking both in itself and in its effects. It was chiefly to pull down the strongholds of formality and self-righteousness, to show that there was a divine reality in the religion which God wrought by His Spirit and grace in the heart, and that this religion, if genuine, would be manifested by its effects, in separation from the world and living to the praise and glory of God."

On the way home from this first evangelical visit to Oakham (see Letter VIII), William Tiptaft made the acquaintance at Stamford of a certain Mr. de Merveilleux, of Huguenot descent, who had a large medical practice in that town and neighbourhood, and was then a member of the old Independent chapel in Star-lane. "I believe him to be a lover of gospel truth," he writes to William Keal, "and I hope that you will call upon him when you go to Stamford. I met a few friends at his house, and spoke a few words to them. They seemed desirous to hear, and, I trust, are spiritually hungering after the bread of life."

The result of this new friendship was, that when the young vicar of Sutton Courtney again came down to the Midlands in October, 1831, soon after his West-country tour, Mr. de Merveilleux arranged for him to deliver a public address in the Stamford Assembly-rooms, an interesting group of buildings dating from the days when that ancient borough still had a winter season of its own, and there was the annual bull-baiting, and cock-fights in Lord Exeter's new "pit" near the George Inn, and ladies in hoops and powdered hair went to their balls and routs in Sedan-chairs, the last survivor of which, by the way, my father sometimes hired in inclement weather to take him to his chapel.

Here, in the large entertainment-room, where the County balls are still held, and where in her unawakened youth, I am told, Deborah Keal, having driven over from Oakham with ostrich feathers in her hair and her young husband by her side, would tread the measures of the time as eagerly as any, here it fell to William Tiptaft to preach, as my father tells us, to a very large, but miscellaneous audience. "His name and connection had brought together a very full and mixed congregation; and amongst them some of the clergy, and many of the most respectable persons of the town and neighbourhood. Nowise, however, daunted by his congregation, many of whom in time past he had personally known, on he went in his usual way, denouncing with no unsparing language the Church of England, the general Dissenters, etc., and preaching just as he would have done had he been standing in a waggon, which he would have much preferred, before a congregation of rural auditors. Some went out, and others who stayed to the end audibly testified their disapprobation.

It was, however, as he used to say, his first and last sermon in the Assembly Room, for it could not again be obtained for that purpose.

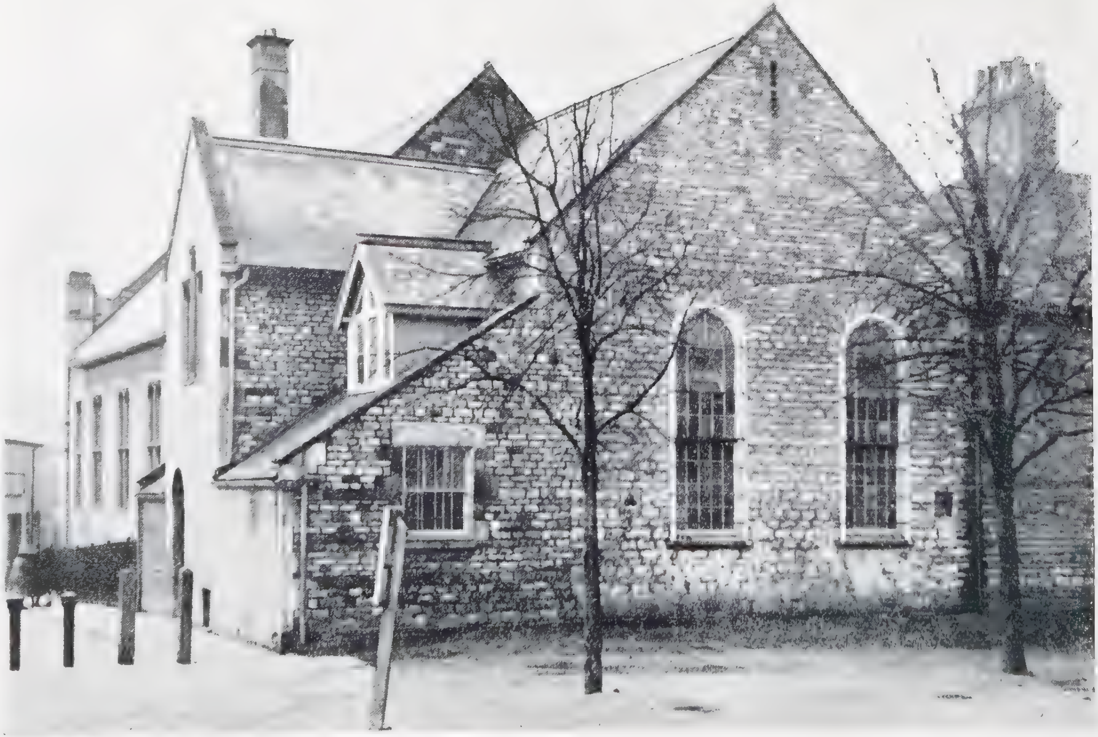
"To such a large and mixed congregation, deep, experimental preaching was not adapted. This would come afterwards, when they were sifted and separated from the surrounding mass; but for the present a more simple, elementary testimony was needed; for, without having an experience themselves, how could his hearers understand, or enter into a purely experimental ministry? But they could understand, and feel, too, at least many of them, his hard, sharp knocks against the door of conscience, and his short, pithy sentences, which in a few words cut up, root and branch, all false religion. Not less striking were his bold statements of doctrinal truth, for he did not wrap up election in a few fine phrases which give no offence because they convey no definite meaning, but brought it forward in a way so clear as to lie level with the simplest capacity, and yet so plain and pointed, that the hearers must either rise up in wrath and enmity against it, or fall under it as a Bible truth."

Amongst the latter in this instance was John George de Merveilleux himself. The effect on him was such, that he forthwith severed his connection with the Independents, and decided to build at his own expense a chapel in which the truths, to which his eyes had been, as it were, miraculously opened, might be faithfully and regularly preached. But an unexpected difficulty presented itself. Stamford was then a typical pocket-borough, and the reigning Marquis of Exeter, who was influential in the counsels of the Tory party and already owned more than half the town, snapped up every vacant site almost before it came into the market, to protect his political monopoly; though it is but fair to admit that he selected as his nominees such promising embryo-statesmen as the future Lord Salisbury, and his faithful henchman, Stafford Northcote. Even when with difficulty Mr. de Merveilleux had found a site, outside the town-wall and with a somewhat unsavoury approach, he dared not disclose the object of his purchase. Purchased, however, it was, and William Tiptaft had the satisfaction of preaching over its foundation-stone, and of opening it eventually for public worship in 1834. From first to last, site and chapel, after gallery and vestry had been added in 1838, cannot have cost Mr. de Merveilleux less than £1,000, a considerable sum in those days, and until his lamented death in 1843. when he was buried within its precincts, he took no rent for it, and bore all the expenses himself, every seat being free. It was here, to anticipate a little that on October 23, 1836, my father, through William Tiptaft's introduction, preached his best-known and best-abused sermon (see his Letters 20 and 23), which he subsequently committed to paper, amplified and published under the arresting, but paradoxical title of *The Heir of Heaven walking in Darkness, and the Heir of Hell walking in Light.* Its latest edition was issued in 1926, ninety years after its delivery, a claim which could not be made for many sermons preached in the nineteenth century. In it he took occasion to comment rather severely on "a piece of religious humbug transacted in this town last Wednesday."

It having been found necessary to rebuild from its foundations the ancient church of St. Michael, the Bishop of Lincoln with seventy of the clergy had assembled to consecrate the new building, or, as my father somewhat sarcastically put it, "to make holy the bricks and mortar, the pulpit and the pews, the organ, the chandeliers and the gas-pipes." Such strictures were not calculated to make him popular among the clergy of Stamford. Possibly, could he have known that it would be his destiny to live for over a quarter of a century in that very orthodox town, to bring up a young family in it, and to preach at least two thousand sermons from that same grained and varnished pulpit, he might, though I don't think he would, have modified his language. For at that time of his life he was anything but a temperate voice. Passionate beliefs never have been and never will be temperate. Read once more the minor Hebrew prophets.

More than twenty years later, when I was a boy, I remember this brand-new church of St. Michael being struck by lightning on two occasions, a thing, which, so far as I know, never happened to any of its five elder sisters. Was it because the Bishop and his clergy, again to quote my father, "had forgotten the main thing after all, the *holy water* which they ought to have preserved from the Roman Catholics as well as the rest of the mummery ? "

But forgive me, I was forgetting that at the point to which we have come, my father had not yet been able to make up his mind to surrender his Fellowship, to give up his living, and throw in his lot with the poor despised children of God. He had not yet become a "Seceder," with all a seceder's rights of free speech. The best part of his story is still to be told.



NORTH-STREET CHAPEL, STAMFORD

(From the back, with later additions).

The ancient towns of Stamford and Oakham, which will henceforth play a leading part in our narrative, must have been originally laid out on quite different plans. Stamford, to which we shall have to return later, being situated on the Great North Road, arose as a ford-head, a walled parallelogram, guarding the only easy passage across the Welland between the Fens of Lincolnshire on the East and the hills of Rutland on the West. Once over the river, the Scots, Picts and other wild raiders from the North, who in times past were a standing terror to the Stamford burghers, had easy access to the rich pastures of the South, and even to London. Before the Reformation, thanks to the security afforded by its walls, Stamford, as a centre of the wool-trade, sheltered many thriving industries, swarmed with monks and nuns, and was within an ace of becoming the seat of a university. It still has six churches, out of an original sixteen, can boast of that anomaly, a dean without a chapter, and to this day retains an unmistakable odour of surpliced sanctity, though it is not less plagued, I fear, with secret sin than any other town of its size. As a little boy, I had often chatted with Corby, the Stamford murderer, who was to all appearance a quite respectable old carpenter, when he came on odd jobs to our house in Rutland Terrace.

Oakham, on the other hand, lying, as it does, in more broken country, cupped in a fertile vale almost engirdled by hills, had less to fear than its neighbour from the fierce Northern raiders; while the whole county of Rutland, of which it is the chief town, never harboured more than one small priory, that of Brooke, close to Braunston. Nevertheless, as a glance at its plan will show, Oakham, though an open town, had its own primitive system of defence. No high road passes through it, so that William Tiptaft on his visits had to leave the coach at Uppingham and drive his last six miles in a fly. The approaches to the town itself are still narrow and tortuous. The High-street, fairly wide, is contracted at either end into a bottle-neck, easy to barricade. The Market-place leaves it at a right angle and is partly blocked at its lower end by a row of open stalls known as The Shambles. It then bends to the left and widens into a closed area whose only other exit or entrance is a narrow footway leading to the church and open fields. All has been planned expressly, it would seem, to defend the vital centre of the town in an age when spearthrusts, sword-cuts, and slings and arrows were all men had to provide against.

Centrally placed near the end of the open space, or *cul-de-sac*, here about a hundred feet wide, is the Butter-cross, a venerable structure consisting of a high-pitched octagonal roof, supported on eight stout wooden pillars, with a stouter one in the centre, rising from three tiers of stone steps. Here on market-day a hundred years ago the pleasant farm-wives used to sit with their week's produce at their feet, butter and eggs, poultry, fruit, mushrooms, and I know not what else, while their husbands displayed their samples of corn, or higgled over their live-stock, on the cobbled space around. For in those days the Butter-cross was the very hub and centre of the town, the lineal descendant, it may be, of its primitive hearth and altar, the symbol of its pristine purpose—peaceful marketing.

When the Normans came, they threw up a large castle-enclosure, into which, in case of attack, the poor villeins might drive their livestock and leave their hovels to be sacked and burnt. In it they built a stately hall, which claims to be the best, if not the only surviving example of their domestic architecture, and in which the Assizes are still held. Later a fine large church with a lofty steeple arose in the big graveyard near by. But the point I want to make, and the map will bear me out, is, that these were all afterthoughts, accretions, visibly tacked on to a plan which went back, probably, to the days of pagandom.

Now, when the winter sun mounts above the low houses at the distant end of the Market-place, it casts the peaked shadow of the Butter-cross on to a rambling old stone house, rising to three storeys in the middle, which occupies the whole hundred feet at the top end of the *cul-de-sac* with the exception of its stable-yard-entrance to the South and the narrow foot-way to the church on the North. Roofed like its neighbours, with slates of split oolite from Colly Weston richly encrusted with lichen, the old grey house still rakes, as it did when my grandfather lived there, the whole upper limb of the market-place from one or other of its wide bow-windows, which are level with the ground and well-spaced on either side the main entrance-door, as will be seen in the Illustration.

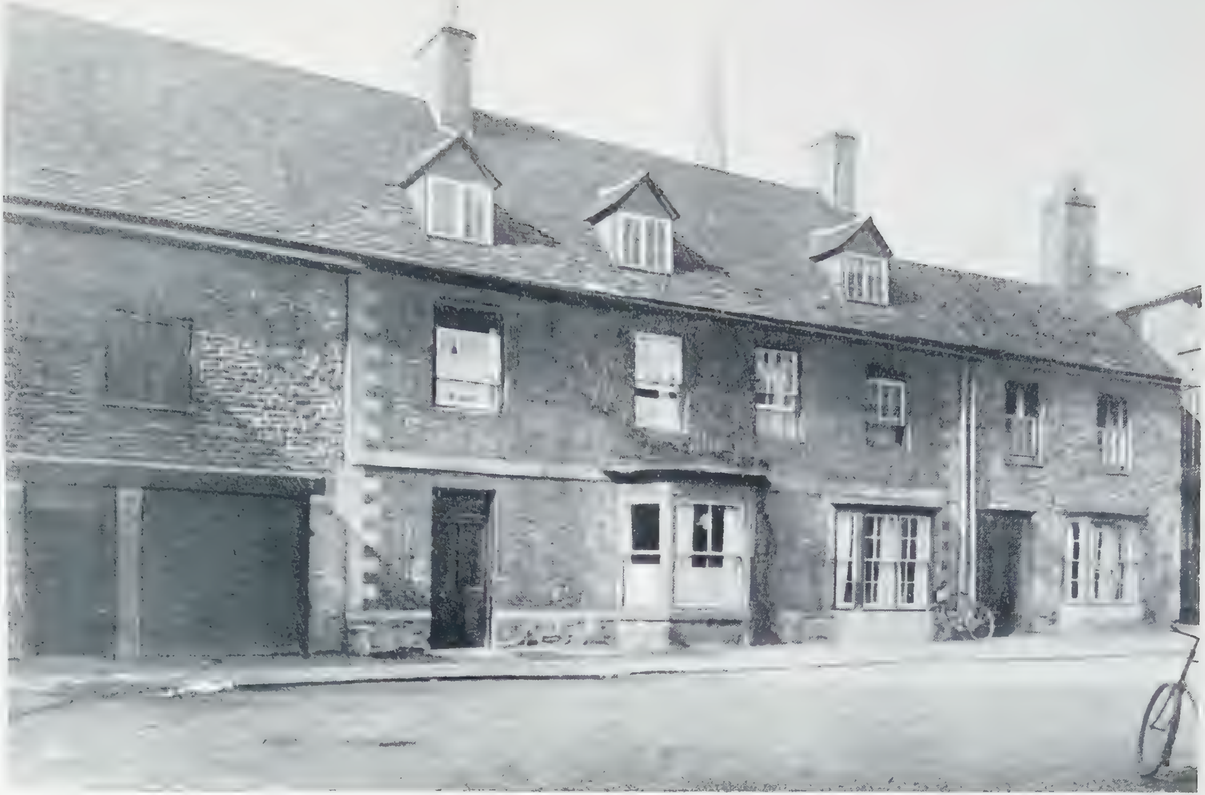
From what I remember as the dining-room one could watch the people hurrying to church, by twos and threes as the sparks fly upward, and look down the sunny side-walk past the awninged chemist's shop to the narrow mouth of Castle-lane, which swallowed up the Judge's procession at the Assizes, and at the Elections belched forth a clamorous mob, with the two new Members for the County " chaired " in their midst.

The opposite, shady side, commanded by the drawing-room window, was occupied until about 1860 by a quaint tumble-down old alms-house, with outside stair-ways at the back, known as the Hospital of Christ, though mainly occupied in its declining years by the young pupils whom its Warden, the Revd. John Doncaster, D.D., head-master of Oakham Grammar-school, took in as boarders, and who, at this very time when William Tiptaft was leaving the Church of England, included two promising youths destined under the names of Bishops Ellicott and Atlay to render her conspicuous service. Living so near to my grandfather's house, passing its bow windows repeatedly on their way to the Elizabethan school-house in the church-yard, Dr. Doncaster's boarders were not to be kept out of it. Young James Keal, who died, alas ! before he could come back from hospital to help in his father's practice, was their school-fellow, and his lively little sisters their willing, if only occasional, playmates. Sometimes they would be asked in to a meal, for there were still cakes and ale in Market-place house, though virtue might interpose a long prevenient grace. My grandfather, by the way, like my father, did not " say grace " ; he asked a blessing, as if in God's hearing. And William Tiptaft always added, " Make us very mindful of the wants of others."

The old Hospital of Christ has long since given place to lawns and modern school-buildings ; business has more or less deserted the Market-place ; at the Assizes the black cap, formerly in occasional requisition, has been superseded by the white glove ; elections are decorous and dull ; the Butter-cross has become a venerable antiquity, admired and envied by the Americans ; but the old house still remains as I remember it. Happily it has been taken over by the Grammar-school for its more juvenile boarders, and football-boots now clatter down the wide and easy oak stairs, up which my bare legs climbed when to the grown-ups the Crimean War was still a painful memory.

Here, in this old house, where his father had practised and reared his own brood before him, William Keal lived for close on fifty years with Deborah his wife, and brought up his eight well-favoured children. Here, in his unregenerate days, when they were still a young married couple, William Tiptaft nearly died of typhoid-fever. Into its letter-box were dropped all those fifty urgent epistles of his which follow. From it he sallied forth to preach the gospel at the Riding-school and in the outlying villages ; and hither in 1838 he brought his broken body to be put together again. Here my mother passed her girlhood, and tried to teach her four unruly younger sisters, until my father came and wooed and won and set her free. Here for more than twenty years, from Queen Victoria's coronation until shortly before the death of tne Prince Consort, he spent four days in every fortnight and preached at The Factory, a quiet study at the back of the house, which opened on to a little walled garth, being set apart for his sole use. And here as a child I passed most memorable times. With scarce an effort I can look back and see my grandfather on a rainy day trotting up the market-place, cased in macintosh and spattered with mud from head to foot, changing his grey horse for his roan, and trotting off again on another long round. In memory I can again cross the square carpeted hall, where lived the old grey parrot on its perch, squeeze my small body through the red-baize, brass-studded swing-door, and make my way into the airy, stone-paved kitchen, where my benign old grandma, in fine lace cap and snowy overall, and her three unmarried daughters are seated round a table, all slicing vegetables for the huge copper-ful of soup, which is brewing for the poor in the wash-house. I can hang about the busy surgery, where my friend, Mr. Adcock, the dispenser, is making up my grandfather's prescriptions, rolling pills, deftly spreading plaister or blister, and wrapping up bottles of mixture or liniment with a magic wrist. Or perhaps, with the parrot shrieking after him, " Adcock, Adcock," in my grandfather's voice, he will take me up all those stairs to the drug-loft with its barrels, carboys, Winchester quarts and all the surgical stores, which a country doctor had to keep on hand when it took days to get a parcel down from London by stage-coach or carrier's cart. Oh ! it was a strenuous life that went on in the old house, whether in surgery, stable-yard or kitchen. No stint of food, nor of work !

One last trivial memory, if only to recall how beneath that busy, cumbered surface there flowed all the while a deep and silent stream. My parents are away and William Tiptaft has come to fill the Oakham pulpit for my father. We are all assembled in the sunny dining-room for morning-prayers, my grandparents,



MARKET-PLACE HOUSE, OAKHAM.

Uncle Tiptaft, my three comely, but as yet unmarried aunts, the country-bred servants, and my small self. After my uncle has read a chapter from the Bible with his beautiful enunciation, we turn our backs upon the laden breakfast-table and the singing tea-urn, and fall on our knees at chair or horsehair sofa. There is an unusual pause. Then from Uncle Tiptaft, "You pray, William." "No, you, William," from my grandfather. "No, you." And William Keal proceeds to pour out his heart in broken accents to the Lord of grace. When I think of the formal prayers, indifferently intoned, which I have since had sometimes to listen to, this tender, trivial memory comes back to me like a breath of the morning. God seemed very near that day.

My grandfather was tall and spare, with a narrowish head, a fresh-coloured face, eyes of forget-me-not blue, like my mother's, fine silky hair and a close-cropped, crinkly beard, both silvered when I knew him. He had been an athlete in his youth, and was a man of great physical strength and prodigious energy. Though much of his day would probably be spent in the saddle, he would be up with the lark, digging and trenching in his distant garden to provide vegetables for his hungry family and his wife's soup-kitchen. He had, I believe, an excellent bedside manner, and his patients were devoted to him. Obstinacy was, I think, his foible. His opinion once formed, he stuck to it through thick and thin, and persisted, for instance, in bleeding, blistering and drenching his patients, long after such drastic measures had gone out of fashion. Perhaps in those full-fed, free-drinking days he may not have been wholly wrong. He was not a great reader, and seldom opened a book. *The Stamford Mercury*, *Bell's Weekly Messenger*, and the newly-founded *Lancet* told him all that he wanted to know. Until——

Yes, until William Tiptaft insisted on making both him and his wife partakers in his own great discovery—for it is a great discovery, which the present generation, parsons I fear included, seems inclined to fling away—the discovery, I mean, of the Bible as a bosom-friend and not a mere bowing acquaintance. "Read your Bible frequently," he wrote to them, "Get well acquainted with it." "Read Paul's Epistles. They beautifully throw light on the other Scriptures." And soon, in their rare moments of leisure, the Bible was seldom out of my grandparents' hands. It brought them, I think, nearer together. Indeed, it might be said without much extravagance, that, like William

Tiptaft and the rector's daughter, they renewed their spiritual courtship over an open Bible. And in the difficulties which lay ahead of them, they would need all the support it could give. "It must be a source of great joy and delight," wrote his brother-in-law, "that you and your wife think alike, that you can provoke one another to love and good works, and cheer one another under the persecution of a wicked world."

As my father wrote in his Preface to William Tiptaft's Letters, "What he said, he knew; what he wrote, he felt. He never set his foot down to lead others by an untrodden way. He had gone over it night and day, till he thoroughly knew the track, and then he could say with confidence, 'Follow me.'" Those, therefore, who have read his letters with the attention they deserve, will need no telling how urgent and insistent was the spiritual pressure he brought to bear upon my grandfather and his wife. But to what extent he backed it up, when he came to visit them, by word of mouth and fervent prayer, by the example of his self-denying life, and by the fervour of his preaching in the crowded Riding-school, must be left to the imagination. We can only judge by the ultimate results, which, briefly, were that my grandfather, his wife, his three maiden sisters, Sarah, Rebecca, and Louisa Keal, broke away from their little world, "came out from among them," gave up their sittings in the parish-church and eventually pooled their resources (see Letter XXXI) to convert two floors of a derelict silk-factory, which my grandfather had recently purchased, into a Calvinist chapel, where they might sit under a minister known to be sound in the faith. Thereafter for forty years, in the absence of such minister, which happened every fortnight in my father's time, William Keal, until stricken down in the very act of worship, conducted the services himself, read the Bible, followed by some published sermon, engaged in prayer, and led the hymns, for which his musical endowment and tuneful voice eminently fitted him.* I have a child's remembrance of a row of five or six terribly earnest male singers, with my grey-bearded grandfather at the end, raised on an *estrade* facing the congregation with a narrow desk before them, and pouring out their hearts in song with as little concern for the quaint faces they pulled as the choristers in Luca Della Robbia's "Cantorie."

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* For Obituary notice, see *Gospel Standard*, August, 1874, Vol. XL., p. 331.

Of course, as William Tiptaft had amply warned them, they had much to put up with from their little self-satisfied Oakham world. It was not so much the doctrines they professed, amply covered as they were by the Articles of the Church, as their claim to the right of private judgment, and, still more, to the right of private feeling, which made their old church-going friends so hot against them. Though the days of overt persecution were happily long past, those who a hundred years ago obeyed the divine command, "Come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord," could expect no more consideration from the "them" than the Lollards received from Archbishop Arundel. For when it sails under theological colours the herd-instinct can be ruthless. The Greek words "heresy" and "schism," it is worth noting, were innocent enough until religious passion envenomed them. So, my grandparents became, in William Tiptaft's phrase, "speckled birds," in their little world. The birds round about were against them (Jeremiah xii. 9), and they had to endure the cruel pecking which is the "speckled bird's" fate. Had they not, I should scarcely be troubling after all these years to write about them. As William Tiptaft was fond of quoting,

> "The greatest evil we can fear,
> Is to possess our portion here."

At one time it looked as if my grandfather might have to give up his comfortable abode and seek his fortunes in a less censorious neighbourhood, so many of his best-paying patients forsook him. But he hung on, and sooner or later they grew tired of spiting their health to nurse their prejudices, and mostly came back, so that by the time I knew him, there was scarcely a house in Oakham, or a country-seat in the neighbourhood, and Rutland is full of country-seats, where his was not a welcome presence. Finches, Noels, Lowthers, Cecils, Heathcotes—I can well remember the bated breath with which such and other historic names were mentioned across the dinner-table, for in those days, you may be surprised to hear, the fear of the great Almighty did not necessarily preclude a deep-seated veneration for their little mightinesses, the County Magnates.

It would be a mistake to suppose that there was no religion in Oakham or elsewhere in the early nineteenth century. There was plenty. But the life had gone out of it. The salt had lost its savour. For not even a Church, to vary William Tiptaft's aphorism, can keep its own soul indefinitely alive. From Hezekiah to William Booth the history of religion is a history of revivals. Officially, ostensibly, the Church of England still held the doctrine of predestination—i.e., of determinism. But in reality it had long since swung round to the opposite pole of free-will, and had come to believe with John Wesley, Dante and William Tiptaft's young lady, that

> " La Bontà infinita ha si gran braccia,
> Che prende ciò che si rivolge a lei,"*

that the Infinite Goodness hath arms so wide that it receiveth that which turneth back to it—of its own accord.

But in a future chapter you shall find the whole question of free-grace and free-will, of Arminianism *versus* Antinomianism, which once so vexed the churches, put much more forcibly than I can put it by a poor, uneducated Lancashire weaver.

Owing, perhaps, to a strong infusion of Danish blood, for most of its place-names end in " by," Rutland had formerly been a strong-hold of the Puritans, and something of the Puritan spirit still lingered on under the name of Evangelicism. People still read with avidity Young's *Night Thoughts*, Blair's *Grave*, the *Remains* of poor Kirke White, and sermons by the score. And they seemed to revel in picturing a hell they can have only half believed in. My grandparents' old friend and next-door neighbour, the Rev. John Doncaster, D.D., for instance, described as a stocky figure in shovel hat, knee-breeches, worsted stockings and broad, buckled shoes, who besides being Warden of the Hospital of Christ and head-master of the Grammar School, was Chaplain to the gaol, had very sombre views of life, we are told, and an ever-present fear of the Day of Judgment. He encouraged his young pupils to attend the Assizes, that they might take warning from sad examples, and on one occasion when, as gaol Chaplain, he had himself to accompany the malefactor to his doom, he gave the boys a holiday that they might witness the execution. My old schoolmaster at Stamford, the Revd. F. E. Gretton, who at this time was assistant-Master at Oakham and acting-Chaplain to the gaol, has some curious stories to tell in his *Memory's Harkback* (London, Bentley, 1889) of the haphazard way in which justice was administered in Rutland in pre-Victorian days. Executions were not common, but they have left their mark. They took place on a slight eminence on the Uppingham Road, known as Mount Pleasant. The bridge over the rivulet where the doomed man first came in sight of the gallows is still marked on the ordnance map as "Swooning-bridge," and the lonely heath where his poor, pestilential body would afterwards hang in chains is known to this day as "Gibbet-gorse"* It gives one an insight into the times, that so worthy a man as Dr. Doncaster could actually believe that his young pupils would be drawn to virtue and deterred from vice by the awful spectacle of some poor wretch being hanged for a trivial breach of the sacred laws of property, on the verdict of a jury, who in the eyes of Eternal Justice were in all probability scarcely less guilty than himself.

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* *Purgatorio* III., 122.

There has come down to me, yellow and wrinkled with age, a placard which gives one a glimpse of an earlier and even more soul-less Oakham. It is dated June 6, 1814. For just a month Napoleon has been safely interned, as it was thought, in his island prison of Elba, and Europe breathes again. The Allied Sovereigns are expected in London and among other diversions are to visit the ancient building in which St. Paul's School is housed, and my father, as a new boy, sees it being shored up with timbers lest it should topple on to their august heads. At Oakham my grandfather, an energetic young bachelor of twenty-two, has come home on holiday from walking the united hospitals of Guy and St. Thomas in the Borough to the old house in the market-place, where he lives with his parents and unmarried sisters. From the placard we learn that his father, also William Keal, has just presided over a meeting of the leading inhabitants of Oakham, called in order to consider how best to celebrate "the present happy termination of hostilities in Europe by a Public Rejoicing in gratitude foi an Event so important to the Interests of the British Nation & the best feelings of human Nature." In addition to a general illumination of houses, it is decided to give the poor a Cold Dinner & Ale in the Shambles, or other convenient place; to hold a Public Dinner, "when the Company of all Friends to the Noble Independance and Exalted Grandeur of the British Nation will be esteemed a Favor," and, lastly, on the following day to give a Ball and Supper. For this purpose, we learn, the Rev. D^r Doncaster had offered the use of his school-room, but as it was an ancient Elizabethan building in the churchyard and not easy of approach, the offer has been declined and preference given to that well-kept hostelry, the Crown Inn. A committee, including the names of W. Keal, Jun^r and James Tiptaft, his first cousin and contemporary, and William's eldest brother, is appointed to carry out the requisite arrangements.

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* For much of this information I am indebted to *The Book of Oakham School* by W. L. Sargant, M.A. (Cambridge University Press, 1928) the frontispiece of which reproduces a contemporary water-colour sketch of the old Hospital of Christ and the Butter-cross.

What strikes one most forcibly about this placard is, that it is what we should now term a thoroughly "jingo," I may say pagan, production. Though two of the clergy are on the organising committee there is no mention, as there would undoubtedly be to-day, of any religious celebration, of any acknowledgment of heavenly goodness and mercy. Nor are the upper classes, the landed gentry, invited to take part in the festival. God, if I may say it without irreverence, is as much ignored as are the county magnates. And no one seems to have had any premonition of the long, lean years of peace, which are to bring ruin to the yeoman farmer, as the war brought him wealth. The winter of his discontent is yet to come. "And the seven years of plenteousness that was in the land of Egypt were ended, and the seven years of dearth began to come."

X. "BRINGING HIS SHEAVES WITH HIM."

IN an age so incredibly heartless, brutalized and corrupt, with every public hanging, of which there were many, converted into a pandemonium; with a flagrant sinner on the throne, or only just off it; with bishops quite ready to vote for Disestablishment if they could only make sure of their life-pensions; with churches empty and beer-shops crammed, can you wonder that William Tiptaft should have come to regard the world as lying hopelessly in wickedness, and should have been moved with yearnings to call God's few chosen people out from it, as Lot had been called out of Sodom? "The times seem very momentous," he writes, while still vicar of Sutton Courtney (Letter XVII), "considering the very disturbed state of the country, and a daily expectation of the spreading of the cholera. Men's hearts may be said to be failing them, for fear of what is coming upon earth. But God's people are safe."

It was a dark hour for England, so dark, indeed, by general consent, that the more serious-minded of the post-war generation, now just come to years of discretion, were crying and groping in the dark, like frightened children, after some stable and abiding support, some "truth of the Lord that endureth for ever." There were those who like that born celibate, John Henry Newman, finally came to rest upon an infallible Church; others, like his brother and Blanco White, pinned their faith on to a then presumably infallible reason; others clung the more closely to that marvellous storehouse of spiritual experience, the Bible; while a few, after long waiting, were brought out of darkness and despair by gracious manifestations of God's mercy to their souls, which made them akin to the prophets and saints of old, who had been favoured with a like experience. "For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it: because it will surely come, it will not tarry"—indefinitely.

Poor William Tiptaft, after his early assurance began to falter, "wandered disconsolate and waited long." As he writes to my grandmother, January 31, 1843, "You know I have had to wait, and have been much tried, because the Lord has not blest me more with His presence and manifestations of His love. I have known what it is to sit in the dust, almost without hope, whether the Lord would ever put a new song in my mouth." Then came the blessing, already mentioned, and "I asked myself whether I would rather have a large bag of gold, or this blessing, and I felt a large bag of gold was no more to me than a large bag of pebbles, compared to the Lord's rich blessing" (Letter XLIX). But for years before this culminating experience he had already spent his strength and strained his health in finding and calling out God's chosen people from a careless and licentious world.

"The Lord only knows," he writes to my grandfather, "what hidden ones are in your dark little town and county, and He will appoint some means to bring His banished ones home." His solemn conviction, which only deepened with the years, that he himself was one of these *means*, not as ordained by a bishop, but as *appointed* directly by the Most High, was what sustained him through a life of unremitting toil, tortured though he was by an awful sense of his responsibility. In the vestry before service, we are told,* he would pace the floor; sitting in the pulpit, while the hymn before his sermon was being sung, he would appear to be in agony. Then he would rise to his feet, shaking his head and wringing his hands. Unfit as he was—ignorant as he was—unworthy as he was, to stand up between the everlasting God and never-dying souls, he would pray most earnestly, that God would give His people a spirit of prayer for him who was about to address them. "Oh! grant him seals to his ministry and souls for his hire."

So wholly absorbed was William Tiptaft in his sacred mission, so rich and urgent had eternal things become to him, that, as I said before, he never opened a newspaper, and seldom any book except the Bible, and he knew little and cared less about what was happening in the world around him. It is related of him that once, when travelling by coach to preach, he came to a town where bells were ringing, flags flying, and people by the thousand thronging under triumphal arches. To his enquiry, a fellow-traveller, who had come miles to share in the spectacle, replied that they were there to do honour to the great Duke of Wellington. "Oh! indeed," said William Tiptaft in an unfeigned indifference, with which at this distant date some of us perhaps can sympathise.

With "living souls for his hire," he had an almost superstitious aversion from receiving any other. Nor would he, so long as his own small capital of four or five thousand pounds held out. Once when a devoted friend, hearing that he had wasted all his substance in giving help to others, sent him a cheque for £800, he would only accept it on condition that he might at once hand over half of it to the poor, and much of the residue, I believe, soon followed it.

After he had more or less emerged from the trying period of doubts and fears and grievous self-distrust so fully recorded in his correspondence, and had been visited with the wonderful experience already mentioned, he settled down to a life of unremitting labour. During the twenty years which followed upon that "signal blessing," he was, to quote my father's words, "most abundant in the labours of the ministry, there being scarcely a town or village in any part of England where there was a people who knew and loved the truth, which he did not, as opportunity offered, willingly visit. The people of God at Manchester, Liverpool, Preston, Birmingham, Bradford, Helmsley, Lincoln, and many other places at the North; at Cirencester, Bath, Trowbridge, and almost innumerable chapels in Wilts in the West; Rochester, Maidstone, Faversham, in the East: Brighton, Chichester, and The Dicker in the South, with many other places which I cannot now name, all knew his voice, and loved and esteemed him for his bold and faithful testimony. Wherever he went his personal kindness, his freedom from all pride and pretence, his liberality to, and sympathy with the poor, his keen, pithy sentences, and his acknowledged godliness of life, added a weight to his public testimony such as few ministers in our day have, I believe, possessed."

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* *Reminiscences of the late William Tiptaft.* Oxford, Pembrey, 1875.

The card-index cabinets of the Church- and Salvation-Armies must be bulging, I am sure, with cases, like the one I am about to quote, of "brands plucked out of the burning," and no doubt they follow them up, to prevent their catching fire again and being wholly destroyed. For, as I have said before, the tests of a true re-birth are newness of life and endurance to the end. The case in question, which I have selected from many others for reasons which will, I trust, commend themselves to the reader, carries us back to the days when William Tiptaft, as yet unharassed by self-misgiving, came down to the Midlands to stay at Oakham, and when, not content with preaching at the Factory, he would get a lift from my grandfather, or a seat in a carrier's cart, or would tramp on his own feet to some outlying village to call men to repentance in a convenient barn or field, and seldom, it may be added, without "coming again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

Some seven miles East by North from Oakham, past the historic mansion of the Finches at Burley-on-the-Hill and the famous Cottesmore Kennels, will bring you to the Great North Road at a point about ten miles north of Stamford. Follow it on its way to Grantham for another seven miles and you will come, if you carefully avoid the new by-pass, to the head-waters of the Witham and the long street of Colsterworth, near to which in 1642, the great Sir Isaac Newton was born, a yeoman farmer's son.

Here nearly two hundred years later, in the summer of 1834, while William Tiptaft was preaching in a barn (he had preached there before and was well known in the place (see Letter XXXI), "the Lord," to quote my father, "sent the Word home with power" to a very different Isaac, by name Cooper, and by trade a village tailor, who was known in the neighbourhood as "a notorious character for card-playing, cock-fighting, drunkenness, fighting, revelling, and such like, with other practices not fit to mention," in short an unmistakable black-sheep. And such, no doubt, had William Tiptaft never come to Colsterworth, he would have remained to the end of the chapter, a nuisance to the countryside and a deplorable example to the rising generation. Instead of which, he soon became a new creature and, having been eventually baptized by William Tiptaft, remained until his death nearly thirty years later an unfailing attendant at, and a consistent and much esteemed member of, the little church at Oakham and, I may add, my father's devoted friend. I will quote from a long obituary notice in the *Gospel Standard* (August, 1863, p. 246) just enough to give a vivid picture of the man himself and of the parlous times in which he lived.

"When you came to preach at Colsterworth in 1834," to quote from a letter of his to William Tiptaft, "I was at a public-house and the discourse was, that the man who was sending all the people to hell was going to preach in a barn the next day, and several of the company agreed to go, I amongst the rest. In the course of your preaching, as you were calling in the outcasts of Israel, you spoke these words, which came like a two-edged sword into my soul: 'The lame, the blind, the halt and all that were in debt, for David's band was such.' My soul was stung within me, my companions were mocking by my side, but I was cut up root and branch; and when the preaching was over, I returned home, leaving my company and joined another party, who were praising the sermon very much; and amongst them the clerk of the parish, who said he was determined to be a hearer of yours, if he lost his place, but I have never seen him there since.

"I was under soul-trouble all night and, as you were to preach at Stamford next day, I determined to see you pass by,* going into a little public-house on the road for the purpose, but taking care that no one knew my business. There I fell in with part of the company I had been with the night before, when one of them got on a chair to mimic the preaching we had heard.

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* On his way, I infer, to open Mr. de Merveilleux' new chapel.

This I could not stand, so went into a stable till it was over, and when you had passed I intended returning home ; but Satan prevailed, and I got very much intoxicated. Two companions and myself started home ; but I wanted to be alone, and I stopped upon the road behind. Here Satan began with me, telling me I was not fit to live, and that I had better destroy myself. He worked me up to such a pitch that, if the Lord had not interfered, I should have then and there committed suicide. I continued in soul-trouble for a long time, but this was not the appointed season for my deliverance from my carnal lusts, for the Lord still permitted me to go on with my gambling courses, but I continued to ask His pardon every time that I knew I had offended, and thought that I got on pretty well, as Satan always contrived to send me a companion, when there was a cock-fight or card-party within ten miles of the place ; and when it was over I continued to go to church, or read a chapter, and thought all was well again. . . . Still I went on sinning and repenting, and Satan would many times persuade me to destroy myself, as he told me I was a disgrace to all men ; and I was sure that it was the truth, for though the devil does not often speak truth, he happened on it that time.

" But I shall now pass on to the time when the Lord began to work on me in good earnest. I was standing in the street of our village, and a carrier's cart was returning from Oakham with some of your hearers, and a man that stood by me exclaimed that he wished the cart would break down and break their necks. I felt shocked at the expression, and a voice within me said : ' You shall be with them '."

And " with them " he was. For soon after, although he was a heavy man and of sedentary occupation, nothing would prevent Isaac Cooper from walking the ten miles to Oakham in wet weather or fine, whenever there was a preaching. Later on, one is glad to learn, he was able to buy a pony and a little huckster's cart to take him.

One further fact we glean, which, though very usual in such cases (see Letter XLIX), is to me of extraordinary interest, for we know little of the psychology of lacrimation in the male, except that it certainly is not, as in the female, a recognized weapon, or wile. After rising from his knees one day, we read, after a view of Christ by faith, Isaac Cooper found quite a pool of wet under him from the tears which had fallen from his eyes.

"My eyes, from a child," he writes, "never knew what it was to be wetted with tears. I had buried my father and mother, but not one tear could be produced from my hard heart; but not so now, as floods of tears fell from my eyes."

One last quotation: "He has watered my soul scores of times," he says of his "own dear minister," my father. "Sometimes he has said a word or something which has not suited me, and I have been boiling up against him at times during the whole fortnight. I have come to chapel, he has gone through the travail of my soul, and I have loved him as much as ever. All was right again. Then I could see what the devil had been doing with me."

You may be interested to hear that Isaac Cooper satisfied the two tests, newness of life, and, in spite of countless trials, endurance to the end. I have given his case at some length, not only because he furnishes a link between William Tiptaft's ministry and my father's, but because he is a good example of the sort of hearers, the hungry souls but fastidious feeders, which an experimental preacher has to cater for, and indeed, to live up to. "The Lord's people are very odd people to rule," writes William Tiptaft, in a moment of dejection, "and to keep them even looking kindly towards each other" (Letter XXXII). And yet, as we shall see, how they crowded round his death bed! And yet, as my father was to write some years after his secession, "Have I not made a good exchange? An easy conscience for a galled one, liberty for bondage, worship in the spirit for worship in the form, and a *living, discerning people* for dead formalists!"

As I have said before, a living faith is never wholly free from doubts and fears. With the terrible examples of Peter, Thomas and Judas before his eyes—and the fact that the two first are not glossed over in the sacred record, is the best proof of its veracity—no regenerate soul can ever entirely shake off the apprehension, that he too may come to doubt, or deny his Master and betray His cause, or, what is still more awful, cease to care whether he does or doesn't. This was why William Tiptaft prayed so earnestly all his life that his last days might be his best days, and why, as we shall see, he rejoiced with an exceeding great joy when he found his desire fulfilled. So fearful, indeed, was he lest he might not endure to the end, that he left behind him scarcely a scrap of writing, which might possibly be used against him as a lasting condemnation. Unlike my father, whose published sermons are numbered by hundreds, he would seldom consent to the publication of his. One only, so far as I know, is in present circulation, a sermon entitled "Salvation by Grace" which he delivered at Helmsley Blackmoor in 1855. From the same year dates the following bald statement, which my father inserted in his Memoir, and which may here serve to refresh the reader's memory as to what has gone before.

"It is now more than twenty-four years since I left the Church of England. I was a minister in that church nearly six years. I was appointed curate to Treborough, Somerset, by Archdeacon Trevelyan in March, 1826; in Jan., 1828, I was appointed curate of Stogumber, in the same county, by his son George; and in Feb., 1829, I was instituted to the living of Sutton Courtney, and left it Nov. 24th, 1831. It is nearly thirty years since I was ordained in Wells Cathedral. My hair is grey, and I am writing with spectacles; so in various ways I am reminded how fast my life is passing away, as a tale that is told. I trust my soul was quickened in Jan., 1827, and from that time I have had marks of the fear of God in my heart, and earnest desires to be taught aright by the Spirit of God. But how dark, blind, and ignorant I have been respecting spiritual things, and how I should have continued so, if it had not been for rich and sovereign grace! Blessed be God for the little I do trust that I do know of myself as a vile sinner, and of Jesus Christ as a precious Saviour. How gradually did the scales fall from my blind eyes, and how gradually have I been led to know the blessed doctrine of the final perseverance of the saints, and also the doctrines of predestination and election! How earnestly did I pray that, if these despised doctrines were true, I might receive them; if they were not true, that I might reject them; and the Lord confirmed the doctrine of election to my soul by applying that portion respecting the opening of Lydia's heart. I was convinced of the truth of it, which took place the latter end of the summer of 1829. Through mercy, I have been enabled to contend for the doctrine ever since, but I know it is a hard doctrine to receive, and feel risings in my own mind against it. It is a blessed doctrine, when fully received in the heart, as the 17th Article describes it. W. Tiptaft."

"Dec. 4, 1855."

As the ensuing chapters will be mainly devoted to my father, we will here follow William Tiptaft in his pilgrimage to the very end. For in the whole range of religious literature I doubt if you will find a more striking instance of the triumph of the spirit over the flesh, than was displayed by William Tiptaft on his death-bed. Men have gone singing to the stake amidst the tears of their friends and the howls of their enemies, but that is a very different thing from being blessedly enabled to keep one's soul alive to the very end of a prolonged and painful sickness.

Insidiously attacked, like the Emperor Frederick, while still in the vigour of life—he was barely sixty—by, perhaps, the most ghastly affliction of which a man can die, cancer of the throat, he at length after many a struggle has had to give up preaching and again to take refuge with my grandparents in the comfortable home which they had built for their declining years on land long since purchased when the Oakham canal-head was filled in. But this time, alas! there is to be no recovery. Here, supplied with every comfort, he stays for nearly a year, steadily growing weaker and never out of pain. At last when he feels that the end cannot be far off, his one desire is to get back to Abingdon, and to die amongst his own dear people, a shepherd beside his flock. His last possession has been long since sold, but friends of their charity, nay, of their love, take a small house for him in a quiet part of the town, not far from the cemetery, where his poor body will soon be laid. He is worn to a shadow of his former self. The once powerful voice, which could have filled the Albert Hall, had it then been in existence, has sunk, first to a croak and then to a whisper. Swallowing, long painful, has at last become impossible. And yet with his poor lips he is continually blessing and praising God for His wonderful goodness to him. Devoted friends minister to him night and day; others come in for a moment to clasp his hand, and creep away in tears. An abscess bursts and his last few days are a trifle easier. Starved to death and always in pain and discomfort, he is quite happy. "He then began," records a friend, "as though he would preach to us and said, 'What a mercy! My last moments are my best. Praise God! Praise God!'" A very short while before the unconscious end he is heard to whisper "Thy love is better than wine." If that is not authentic spiritual experience, the phrase to me is meaningless.

He died on August 17, 1864, and was buried a few days later in Abingdon Cemetery. My father was at the time too weak and unwell to commit his body to the grave, but as he wrote afterwards " it might be truly said that ' devout men carried him to his burial and made great lamentation over him ' (Acts viii. 2), for many tears—tears not only of sorrow, but of affection, tempered with holy joy at his blessed end—were shed by the members of his bereaved church and by the friends who came from far and near to pay the last tribute of respect to his memory."

In his Preface to the Memoir my father has left us this estimate of his dead friend's unique personality :

" His daily, I may almost say hourly, self-denial was such as I believe few others, I will not say have manifested, but have even witnessed. He seemed ever ready to make any personal sacrifice for the glory of God, or the good of His people. Time, money, health, strength, and life itself he did not consider his own. He felt he was but a steward who held them in trust, and who might be called at any hour to render an account of his stewardship. To live to God, to walk in His fear, to serve and please Him, to preach His truth, to do His work, to know and obey His will, and be made a blessing to His people, seemed to be his daily end and aim. I have known men of greater natural abilities, of deeper and more diversified experience, of more shining pulpit gifts, of more enlarged views of divine truth ; but I have never seen anyone, whether minister or private Christian, who approached him in his own peculiar line of practical godliness, carried out with undeviating consistency for the 35 years during which I had the pleasure and profit of his friendship. The churches of truth needed an example of the practical power of the doctrines which they profess. A light, loose, antinomian spirit had too much prevailed, and with a great deal of religious talking there was a very small amount of religious walking. But, however low quickened souls, or living churches may sink, they have still a conscience made tender in the fear of God and to this conscience William Tiptaft's keen, pithy remarks, and, above all, his godly life and shining example, commended themselves.

" And as he honoured God, so did God honour him. His last days, according to his frequent prayer, were his best days. He was buried amidst the sobs and tears of a people who loved and revered him ; and he has left to us all the benefit and blessing of a conspicuous example of vital godliness and practical religion, as well as a testimony of the faithfulness of God to His own word and work."

INTRODUCTION: PART TWO.

I. "I MUST SEE MY WAY CLEAR."

STADHAMPTON, in the misty valley of the Thame, has little to recommend it on the score of salubrity, for no one who has ever lived upon the gault can forget what a raw and depressing climate it engenders. "I believe," wrote my father long after he had left it, "that the damp air and soil of Stadham, where I was for nearly seven years in the Church of England, have affected my health up to the present hour." Two claims, however, has the place on our present sympathy and interest. First, it is close to Chalgrove Field, the consecrated spot where, in the early days of the Civil War when Charles I and his Court were at Oxford, John Hampden, that "heroic idealist," as Prof. Trevelyan has called him, received his death-wounds from Prince Rupert's carbineers. Secondly, it was the birth-place, and will always remain associated with the memory, of the foremost of the Puritan divines, Dr. John Owen, whom Cromwell, when the tables had been turned, made Dean of Christ Church in that very Oxford, and whom my father in after-years singled out for his warm admiration, calling him "a writer of great depth and feeling, a master in Israel," and picking out choice morsels from his "Discourses" to fill up odd corners in the *Gospel Standard*.*

That he should have come to regard with such especial favour a leading light of the contemned Puritans, shows what a revolution was taking place in his views and affections even before he left the Church of England, which at that time in one of its Offices still branded the followers of Cromwell as "men of Belial." During his early years at Stadhampton he was, in fact, being torn between two loyalties. Until his call by grace in 1827, he tells us, he idolized the English Church and thought a word against her treason. Even later he loved her still and was able to blind himself to her many inconsistencies. It was only after a bitter struggle within his own soul that his passionate adoration of Christ finally overcame his devotion to the Church in which he had been reared. The psychologists very rightly insist on "the expulsive power of a great affection." A single heart—a truly single heart, cannot serve two masters. Or as the hymn-writer puts it,

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* See his Article on Dr. Owen's *Meditations and Discourses on the Glory of Christ*. *Reviews*, Vol. II., p. 88.

> "God requires pure desires,
> All the heart, or nothing."

In other words, if the human spirit fixes too many of its tentacles upon the Temple, it will have too few left for Him who is greater than the Temple.

For illustration, the Roman Catholic Professor De Sanctis in trying to explain why E. B. Pusey did not follow his friend, John Henry Newman, to Rome asks naïvely, "What affective necessity could bring about the conversion of Edward Pusey, whose soul was already centred upon the Anglican religion, upon which he lavished all the love he had felt for his dead wife, and the divine origin of which he never doubted ?"*

Dr. Pusey, it will be remembered, was one of the youthful company who were ordained by Bishop Lloyd on the same day as my father. That very evening he confided to his diary, "If I do not dedicate all my strength to it (the Church) ; if I do not exert every power to purify my heart and improve my mind, as may most tend to advance His kingdom, I shall have broken my faith solemnly pledged, be a deserter, a renegade, a worse than slothful servant." How well, and to what purpose that pledge was kept, has been detailed in four volumes by his friend, Canon Liddon.

At the date of his ordination my father might almost have written the passage above quoted. That you may judge how far in the course of the next few years he was to be carried beyond that standpoint, pray read the following avowal, dated March, 1842.

"In truth I find religion to be a very different thing from what I once thought it. There was a time when, in all sincerity, I was looking up to my spirituality and heavenly-mindedness, as evidences of my standing, instead of being a poor needy suppliant and starving petitioner for a word or a smile from the Lord Himself. It seemed more as if my spirituality were to take me up to Christ, than that my miserable poverty and nakedness were qualifications to bring Christ down to me. But all these idols have tumbled into ruins."

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* *Religious Conversion*, p. 111. London, Kegan Paul & Co., 1927.

If we follow such records as he has left us of his experiences at Stadhampton, we may actually watch them tumbling.

"When persons breathed a word against the Church of England formerly," he writes in February, 1840, in a letter not included in the present volume, "I felt the bitterest enmity rise up, and I wanted to put them down, stop their mouths, or keep them in any way from broaching a subject so painful to the flesh. But still light would break in and work in my conscience. The burdens of a liturgy and the awful lies I was compelled to tell a heart-searching God pressed me sore. There was no use my fleeing to this or that explanation. I stood before a holy God and told Him with lying lips that a senseless babe was born of water and the Holy Ghost, when I knew the blessed Spirit had no more regenerated the child than He had regenerated the font. I thanked Him for taking a 'dear brother' to Himself, who I knew died under His eternal wrath. But some might say 'How did you know either the one, or the other?' How did I know there was a God at all, but by faith in His Word? And by the same faith that I believed in Him, did I believe that His enemies were not His friends, nor carnal children living members of the true Vine. I twisted and turned every way, but I was here held fast. It is a lie, and the worst of lies, as being a lie unto God."

In my attempted portrait of William Tiptaft I have had to refer incidentally to my father's critical illness and nervous breakdown in September, 1830, of which he has said, "I once made great attempts to be holy, and was getting on pretty well, with, however, some terrible inward pull-backs sometimes, till the winter of 1830-31, when it all went to wrack and ruin." His friend was away at the time "troubling Israel" down in Rutland, and he was all alone in a comfortless farm-house with only an overworked old woman to look after him. "Death stared me in the face," he tells us, "and I used to count how many months I had to live. How I used then to roll about on my midnight bed, with scarcely a hope in my soul; and turned my face to the wall, like good old Hezekiah. In that illness I was made to see and feel that something more than doctrine and knowledge of the truth was required to bear up the soul in the solemn hour. Not that I was not blessed and favoured in the first part of my illness; for I well remember that as I lay very ill in bed on my birthday (Sept. 13) I was so happy in my soul that I said, 'This is the happiest birthday that I ever had.' But afterwards I was much tried in my mind and brought low both in body and mind, and led down into the chambers of imagery, as I had never been before."

The following passage from a Sermon on Eternal Life will throw further light on his state of mind at this period. "When in the Church of England, I had one day to bury a little child, one of the sweetest children in the poorer walks of life that I ever knew. The funeral being a little delayed, I stood at the grave till they brought the corpse for me to bury. I was very poorly in body but favoured in soul; I looked into the grave, and felt, 'Oh, how sweet to lie down there! I never shall be happy in this life; it is but a scene of affliction and sorrow, and I never shall have a body free from sickness and sin till I have a glorified body.' How sweet to look forward to a happy eternity! What a glorious prospect, when realized by faith—eternal bliss in the presence of God; joy for evermore in that happy, eternal home!"

"Slow and sluggish," he writes elsewhere of the body,* "a constant clog to the soul; chained down to the dull clods of clay amongst which it toils and labours; wearied with a few miles' walk to chapel, or with sitting an hour on the same seat; with eyes, ears, mouth, all inlets and outlets to evil; tempting and tempted; galloping to evil and crawling to good; with its shattered nerves, aching joints, panting lungs, throbbing head, and all the countless ills that flesh is heir to; what is this poor earthly frame fit for but to drop into the grave, and be buried out of sight till the glorious resurrection morn?"

It has already been mentioned how my father, having entrusted his parish to the Rev. Charles Brenton, a young Oxford graduate of Oriel College, left the hospitable Vicarage of Sutton Courtney, and went to complete his convalescence at Walmer, in his mother's house. He had not been long there, however, when, as we learn from the earliest of his preserved Letters (No. 1), complaints began to reach him from his parishioners, that they received no comfort from Mr. Brenton's preaching, in reply to which he urges them to be earnest in prayer that the Lord may speak in him and by him to the hearts of His people.

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* *Reviews*, Vol. I., p. 39.

The Rev. T. Mozley, who in his declining years constituted himself the cheerful Boswell of the Oxford Movement, has devoted a whole chapter of his *Reminiscences*, always inclined to be spiteful where an evangelical is concerned, to Lancelot Charles Lee Brenton, known after the death of his father as Sir Charles Brenton, Bart. The only surviving son of Vice-Admiral Sir Jahleel Brenton, a pious, but impecunious old sea-dog, who for conspicuous service with the fleet under Lord Collingwood had been awarded a baronetcy without the means to support it, and appointed Lieut. Governor of Greenwich Hospital, Charles Brenton had been sent up to Oxford, with a quite inadequate allowance and, according to Mr. Mozley, "had developed a harshness and cynicism which did small honour to his religious professions." He took orders, overworked himself in a poor parish, and after nearly succumbing to a fever came back to Oriel in an unbalanced state and bore down the Common-room in a voice that shook the ceiling. It was a great relief to Mr. Mozley and his friends, "though they had some misgivings as to the results," when they heard that Brenton had taken charge of Stadhampton in the temporary absence of Mr. Pears (*sic*), it might be for a couple of months. Before that time had elapsed, it was rumoured that he had refused to bury a drunkard and had preached a violent sermon declaring his intention to quit the Church of England. He published his sermon and told his friends that he had been waiting for an opportunity to renounce his orders and "gladly availed himself of Mr. Pears' offer, as it would be sure speedily to supply him with the desired occasion. The death of the drunkard was all that he needed, and on that text he had preached and acted."*

So far Mr. Mozley. Now for the bare facts. In the first place, as my father informs us elsewhere,† the drunkard in question had been parish-clerk for forty years, and during his last illness had so terrified his nurse with his oaths and imprecations, that she could hardly stay in the room with him. He died in black despair, calling down curses on all parsons, my father amongst them. Now to read the burial service over such a man, and to proclaim to all and sundry, as a minister of the Church of England is bound to do, that "it hath pleased Almighty God of

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* Mozley, Rev. T. *Op. cit.*, Vol. II., p. 114. London, 1882.

† *Secession from the Church of England Defended.* Seventh Edition, 1887. Preface, p. v. London, J. Gadsby.

His great mercy to take his soul unto Himself," is either a mere meaningless formality, or a rank offence to Heaven, and indefensible in either case. So, in order that he might not again be called upon to perform such a "terrible task," Charles Brenton left the Church, and the old sea-dog at Greenwich, when he heard of it, said that he would sooner see his son act thus conscientiously than obtain the highest preferment (Letter XIX).

Secondly, Charles Brenton had been officiating at Stadhampton, not for two months only, but for the best part of a year, and he had intimated that he was quite ready to vacate his post at any moment. And lastly, my father never spoke otherwise than warmly both of the man and of his services. Indeed, so far from being left in the lurch by his defection, as Mr. Mozley presumes, he regarded the event, necessitating as it did his own immediate return to his parish, as "the directest answer to prayer that he had ever had in his life."

According to Mr. Mozley, Charles Brenton's expenses at school and college had been partly defrayed by his uncle, Capt., afterwards Admiral, E. P. Brenton, in order that he might be qualified to prepare for the press that author's *Naval History*, which is, I believe, a standard work. I know not how far that may be true, for though Mr. Mozley informs us that after his secession Charles Brenton opened a chapel at Bath, there is no further mention of him in any of the Letters that follow. But when I was a boy, I remember there suddenly appeared upon my father's sombre book-shelves a beautiful stranger, all gleaming in purple and gold—*Life of Vice-Admiral Sir Jahleel Brenton, Bart.* No doubt a presentation copy from his son. The penurious years at Oriel College had produced a not inconspicuous fruit. Unfortunately, as I have since discovered, it contains almost more about Sir Charles, than about Sir Jahleel, whose own story, including his internment at Verdun while Nelson was winning his last laurels, makes fascinating reading.

As a pleasant seaside place of residence, Walmer is still eminently respectable. In 1831, when my father went there to recruit his jangled nerves, it was still more so, for the Duke of Wellington, as Warden of the Cinque Ports, had just taken up his residence at Walmer Castle and had brought his suite with him. In this sequestered precinct by the sea—that "barren and icy land," my father somewhere calls it—his mother had fixed her home together with her elder surviving son, a harmless unemployable, an elder daughter already beginning to dominate her, and a younger one, a pretty, lively girl, not long out, but soon to wed a distinguished naval officer loosely connected with the Duke's little court, and to become the ancestress of countless descendants now scattered all over the globe. They would have been more than human, my father's family, not to have been grievously disappointed when he sacrificed his promising career; but in the end he brought round his mother, and notably his elder sister, to share in his own religious convictions, and to look on the world's rewards with his own disparaging eyes. All, including even the naval officer, were ingenuous, simple-minded people, who would have found themselves sadly out of place in this our present restless century.

The story of the months of absence from his parish is so fully told in my father's own Letters (1 to 4) that there is little to add. Towards the end of September he left Walmer for Petersfield, meeting William Tiptaft in London on the way, when, we may be sure, the burning question of secession was again most gravely discussed in all its bearings. He was still at Petersfield, undecided as yet where to find a sheltered spot for the winter, when Charles Brenton's unexpected secession recalled him to his parish. Once there, he found himself so wonderfully strengthened for his work, that he concluded that he was not meant to leave it. There followed more than three years of deep exercise of soul and grievous indecision, of letting I dare not wait upon I would, during which he salved his conscience as best as he could by delegating to an assistant such parts of his duty as he could not conscientiously perform.

There can be no doubt that after his long stay and intimate converse with William Tiptaft at Sutton Courtney, and the months of rest in his mother's house at Walmer, when he made his first real acquaintance at *The Refuge* in Deal with Henry Fowler, John Kent and other kindred souls, my father came back to Stadhampton in a very different frame of mind. His difficulties were not lessened, were indeed, increased, but he had more health and strength and vital experience to cope with them. Fortunately from this point onwards some of his letters have been preserved which throw light upon his state of mind. Of almost all of them the burden is, "I must see my way clear." "Nothing short of an answer that the Lord will be my guide, so that I might see the pillar of cloud going before me, will ever induce me to leave my present post." Again, "I am praying to be delivered from a carnal system, but my way out at present seems hedged up. I can't move just when and as I please, but must wait for the pillar and the cloud."

Considering his state of health, one can well understand his hesitation. To leave the Church of England involved resigning both his Fellowship and his living, and going forth into the world without any apparent means of subsistence. His mother on her limited income could not support him in idleness, while his health debarred him from regular occupation as a schoolmaster, or tutor. To unfrock himself meant, in his own words, "parting for truth's sake with the kindest friends after the flesh, as well as with all my prospects in life, an independent income, good name and respectability."

And yet, on the other hand: "Oh! how the sacrament so-called used to gall me! At the head knelt my carnal Pharisaical squire, with his pleasure-loving, God-hating wife, who was so filled with enmity against me that she would never hear me preach. I was compelled to tell them individually and personally that Christ died for them and shed His blood for their sins (I believing all the while in particular redemption), of which I put the elements into their hands, saying, 'Take, eat this,' etc. Lower down knelt a man generally suspected of having once committed a murder, and near him the most hardened Pharisee I ever knew in my life, whose constant reply to my attempted warnings, etc., was, 'I dare say it be as you says.' I was so cut up and condemned that at last I could not do it, and employed an assistant to perform the whole, but then I had to kneel down with these characters, which was as bad; and so I found myself completely hedged in and driven from every refuge, till at last, like an animal hunted down to a rock by the sea-side, I had only one escape, which was to leap into the water, which bore me up and afforded me a sweet deliverance from my persecutors."

From then until the end of his life, my father, while surrounded by devoted friends of his own austere faith, had to submit to the persecution and obloquy which the human herd invariably visits on those who separate themselves from it, and presume to differ in conduct and opinion. True prophets are born to be stoned. It is God's inscrutable will. Had he lived when that great herd known as the Roman Church was in power, he would no doubt have been sent to the stake, as was his namesake

John Philpot in the reign of Queen Mary, for refusing to adore the sacred elements. As it was, that less powerful herd, the Church of England, did its best to victimize him by all the expedients in its power. "Besides my own," he records, "I had but one pulpit open to me in the Establishment in the neighbourhood, and that was more as an accommodation for the person, than love to the truth, as he preached it and, I believe, knew it not. I and another clergyman, a notorious adulterer, almost a *taurus publicus* in his parish, were the only persons the bishop refused to bow to at his visitation."

Bishop Lloyd by this time was no more, and Dr. Bagot, a much less able man, had succeeded him as Bishop of Oxford. On the whole he treated his wayward subordinate with leniency, if not politeness. A complaint was lodged with him that my father from the pulpit had condemned his fellow-clergy for taking out shooting-licences (Letter 5). It found its way, I gather, into the episcopal waste-paper basket. He reprimanded him for employing an assistant without his leave, but took no further steps against him (Letter 7). In 1833, for reasons which appear below, my father deliberately omitted sending up any candidates from his parish for confirmation, quite expecting to have his licence withdrawn. Indeed, he would have welcomed it, as a way out of his difficulties. The wary bishop made no sign, anticipating, perhaps, that, given rope enough, the offender would perform his own execution, as in the event he did.

"At the last confirmation which I attended," wrote my father a few years later, "a waggon was sent from one parish to convey to the ceremony all the young persons who were to be confirmed. And how did these youths and girls, who had just been called 'the servants of God,' and 'all whose sins were said to have been forgiven them,' conduct themselves on their way home? The youths, as I was assured by an eye-witness, amused themselves by pulling off the shawls, and untying with loud merriment the bonnets of the girls, who, in their turn, affected to be angry, though they showed by their smiles that they were inwardly pleased, with the rude jokes and romping of the boys. If we take the text given us, I John iii. 8—10, as our rule, instead of calling such as these 'the servants of God,' would it not be the greater truth to have called them 'the servants of the devil'?"*

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* *Ibid.* Preface, v. p. 94.

And now we come to an interesting series of events which, had they not been written by the pen of Providence, might have convicted their author of having indulged in far-fetched romance. In 1832 William Tiptaft had happened, if the expression may be forgiven, to make the acquaintance of a spiritually-minded young farmer of about his own age, named Joseph Parry, who was supporting, not without difficulty, a little Baptist chapel, which had recently been opened at Allington, a retired hamlet in the very heart of Wiltshire, at the foot of the downs and some six miles from Devizes. The letter which follows, though written nearly forty years after the event, owes its present interest to the fact that it gives the only existing account by an eye-witness of my father's ministry while in the Church of England. What kind, affectionate and helpful friends Joseph Parry and his gentle wife became to my father, and indeed to all of us, will receive full recognition later on.

"Allington, near Devizes,
Nov. 5, 1870.

"My dear Mrs. Philpot,

"In forwarding you your late dear husband's letters written to me years gone by, I cannot refrain from referring to a few of the exercises of my mind before I had the pleasure of personally knowing him in the flesh. My mind became impressed in a most remarkable manner through a conversation which I had with your late dear uncle, William Tiptaft, in the year 1832, relative to the state of soul-experience through which dear Mr. Philpot, then in the Church of England, was passing. I was told that he was so tried and exercised by fears that he was doing wrong in remaining where he was, his conscience was so burdened with the forms and ceremonies he had to attend to, that he had, moreover, such a weak chest, that if ever he saw his way to leave the Establishment he would be unable to take a large place or congregation, and that it was such a trial to his weak state and troubled mind as few persons had ever gone through. After relating to me very many of his deep soul-exercises, and telling me into what a humble, sweet state of mind he was brought down, Mr. Tiptaft said, 'I believe the Lord has so prepared him, that he would be satisfied with ever so humble a residence, provided it were dry, not damp, and were wind-tight and water-tight, with a few poor sensible sinners to preach to, rather than remain with the fetters he has now to keep him in bondage. He said to me the other day, "Tiptaft, all that I can now feelingly say is, 'Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me!'"

"This conversation made such a deep and lasting impression on my mind that I could never get rid of it. It gave me some little encouragement to hope that, as dear Mr. Philpot could not take a large place in a town or anything of that sort, who could tell but the Lord might direct his steps to our little, humble place? And a spirit of prayer and supplication was given me for nearly three years such as I have never before or since experienced for any particular thing, independent of my *own* salvation. I had no rest in my spirit until I had gone up to Stadhampton to see and hear this dear man of God in the church. In the month of October, 1833, my wife and I went; we found the church so thronged with hearers that there was hardly standing, much less sitting, room. I had never seen him in my life, but could not fancy the young clergyman standing there in the desk reading the prayers to be him, from the description our dear friend Mr. Tiptaft had given of him. At length, after the prayers were read, this young gentleman came down, went to what is called the squire's pew, opened the door, and helped the black gown on to a tall and handsome man, who seemed about thirty years of age. The young curate did it so kindly and affectionately towards our friend that it pleased me much to see it.

"Mr. Philpot soon ascended the pulpit, and gave out for his text 2 Cor. iii. 15, 16.* I stood up all the time, listening to every word that he said, drinking it in like a thirsty ox. Amongst other deep and experimental things, he said that he feared the greater part of his congregation were lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, and it was their village feast-day that brought so many to church. The veil of which he had been speaking was over their eyes and hearts, or they could never repeat all those responses they had repeated so loudly, turning and bowing to the east, while some of them were living in the open practice of the very sins they had asked to be delivered from, crying out, 'Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.' Whether it was the squire of the parish, or the meanest pauper, unless they turned to the Lord the veil was not and never would be taken away. I had never heard such faithful preaching in the Church before.

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* "But even unto this day when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart. Nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away."

"After the service was over I handed him a note of introduction which I had from Mr. Tiptaft; he received us very kindly, and at his request we accompanied him across the green to his apartments; and after a little conversation we prevailed on him to return with us in our covered conveyance to Abingdon, about eight miles distant. The old landlady, in whose farmhouse Mr. Philpot had rooms, seemed quite astonished that he should think of going out after church-time, in the month of October, and in the evening too; it was a thing she had never known him to do before. On the same evening we all went to Mr. Tiptaft's chapel to hear him preach, and a very encouraging, blessed time we had.

"After service I believe we all sat and wept together in Mr. Tiptaft's little room. Our two now dear departed friends appeared to be real brothers. We sat up to a late hour, while Mr. Philpot talked very freely of his troubles about continuing in the Church, saying that if he had more grace he should not do so, and it was the want of grace and faith that kept him in it. I remember his quoting from Jeremiah, 'He hath hedged me about that I cannot get out; He hath made my chain heavy.' 'The Lord,' he continued, 'has made me useful and acceptable to many at Stadham and in the neighbourhood, and how can I quit them without some very clear intimation and direction from Him? I know I cannot go back again into the world; but I cannot say I delight myself in the Lord. What a poor minister should I be to a people who have heard and known the truth for years; saddle myself on such I dare not. Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest. Nothing short of an answer that the Lord will be my guide, so that I might see the pillar of cloud going before me, will ever induce me to leave my present post. I should only be a darkener of the Lord's counsel by words without knowledge; for a man may be called by grace without ever being called to the work of the ministry.'

"When he afterwards came to Allington he used to say, 'Now I am come to reside with you just as long or as short a time as we suit each other and the church. I disclaim all priestcraft. I am a poor sinner, not a very *good* man, but a very bad one.' Yet our household can bear witness that a more consistent, honest, upright man never breathed. He, dear man, laid claim to the badness of his heart, but he could lay claim also to the grace God gave him, which pardoned him and justified him freely by redemption of the Lord Jesus. He kept us all in place in the house, and we never once had a jar; all was regularity; and every one respected, loved, and, I may add, revered him.

"When first he came amongst us he was very close and searching in his preaching, and it was enough to make a living man tremble. The only way to become wise was to become a fool, and never to say more of one's self than what the Lord had taught and wrought in you; without Christ man can do nothing. He was made a great blessing to many souls around us, though at first some could hardly understand his line of things and thought him too cutting. I remember how our dear friend Dredge said to me, after one sermon, that he could have gone to the stake and have been burnt for the truths he had heard that morning, rather than give them up. There was life indeed amongst us at that time as a people, and the neighbourhood all round used to flock to Allington from nearly all the different parts of the country, many walking twelve and fifteen miles to hear the word of life. Some when returning home, they have told me, would sit down on the road-side and say, 'Well, we can never stand this searching preaching, it cuts us up root and branch.' One of our old 'supplies' came to chapel, one week-day evening, when Mr. Philpot was expounding in the table-pew from Lam. iii. 16, and said afterwards, 'Well, if the Allington people can stand this searching work, I shall think something of them after all.'

"Dear Mrs. Philpot, I am quite exhausted; I can go no further. I shall be glad if these reminiscences are of any use to you. Wishing you prosperity in the work you have undertaken, and with our united love to you all,

Believe me to be,

Yours very sincerely,

"JOSEPH PARRY."

If that letter has not brought tears into the eyes of the reader and made him love the long-dead man who wrote it (as I did when a child) I give him up.

We shall hear much more of Joseph Parry in the sequel and most of my father's letters in the present volume are addressed to him. His answers, unfortunately, have not been preserved, for, though he often said he would sooner ride fifty miles than write a letter, he could evidently compose a touching one when he tried. His present one has carried us far from Stadhampton and the eighteen-thirties and we must retrace our steps.

Month followed month, and still my father continued irresolute. "I would sooner be turned out than go out," he writes to his new friend. "Let them thrust me out of the land of Egypt and the house of bondage, and my way is clear enough. No one knows what it is to give up a people who love you and a situation where the Lord has blessed you, but those who have the trial." During all those eighteen months which followed his visit to Stadham, Joseph Parry at Allington still went on wrestling in prayer for the thing on which he had set his simple heart. "My thoughts at that time," he afterwards confessed, "were more about you than all my business and everything else put together. I remember how, when I used to walk about the orchard, my thoughts used to be running about making preparations for you, if you should come, contriving sometimes one plan and then another. Sometimes, I thought, if you would never come here, I would move to wherever you settled. Still I could never move back from calling upon the Lord that you might come here, though often questioning whether I was right. Nor was I ever easy till, after my begging and entreating, He made a way open and answered my cry. Let whatever will take place, I know there was a real spirit of prayer for you on me then, and I feel satisfied that your coming to Allington was wholly of the Lord."

How in the end my father found deliverance, not through the pillar and the cloud, not through any "wonderful leading," but in the still, small voice, must be told in his own words. He is preaching in London on God's method of answering prayer and has pointed out how in many minds there is often a kind of confusion with respect to it.

"They are in a certain path," he proceeds, "from which they want to be extricated; they are under a trial, from which they want to be delivered; they call upon the Lord to deliver them; and they ask some manifestation of Himself; some going forth of His hand, some divine leading which they are to follow. But the Lord may be working in a very different way from what they think; and they may really be inattentive to the internal voice of God in their conscience, because they are expecting the voice to come in some other way. It was just so with myself. When I was in the Establishment, burdened with all the things I had to go through, and troubled and distressed in my mind, I was calling upon the Lord to deliver me, to lead me out, to show me what to do, to make the path plain and clear. Now that was my sincere cry; but I expected some miraculous interposition—to hear some voice, to have some wonderful leading; and in waiting for that, I was waiting for what the Lord never meant to bestow. And I was brought at last to this internal conviction; suppose I were living in drunkenness, suppose I were living in adultery, suppose I were walking in known sin, should I want a voice from God to say to me, 'Leave this drunkenness, come out from this adultery, give up this sin?' Should I want some divine manifestation to bring me out of a sin, when my conscience bore its solemn witness, and I was miserable under the weight and burden of it? No; the very conviction is the answer of God to the prayer; the very burden which the Lord lays on us is meant to press us out of that in which we are walking. So I reasoned with myself: 'If I am living in sin, if it be a sin to be where I am, if I must do things which my conscience tells me are sins, and by which my conscience is burdened as sins, the very conviction, the very distress, the very burden, is the answer. It is the voice of God in the conscience, not the voice of God in the air, not the appearance of God in the sky, but the voice of God in the conscience, and the appearance of the frown of God in the heart.' And on this simple conviction I was enabled to act, and never to this day have repented it. I have, therefore, been led to see by experience, that we are often expecting wonderful answers, mysterious answers, and the Lord does not mean to give those answers."*

The end came at last in March, 1835 (see Letter 10). "I told only two persons of my intention," he writes, "and having on Sunday, 22nd, preached in my usual way, I added at the end, 'You have heard my voice within these walls for the last time. I intend to resign the curacy and withdraw from the ministry of the Church of England.' It was as if a thunderbolt had dropped in the congregation. I did not wish any excitement, or manifestation of feeling, and therefore shut it up as quickly as possible. The people were much moved and the next day some met me and said that they could build me a chapel, if I would consent to stay. To this, however, I do not feel inclined, though the people wish it much and say it should not cost me a farthing." In the event, as we shall see, his old hearers did build a chapel, and find a minister after their own hearts to preach in it.

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* *Early Sermons*, Vol. I., p. 264. London, Farncombe, 1906.

No sooner had Joseph Parry heard that there was at last a prospect of his prayers being answered, than he saddled a horse and rode the thirty or forty miles across the downs to Stadham, to find that my father was with William Tiptaft at Abingdon. He followed him there and wrung from him a promise that he would come and stay with him at Allington and preach in the little chapel as soon as he was free. But first his Fellowship must be resigned and reasons shown. This gave my father the opportunity of issuing, as it were, a manifesto in the form of a Letter to the Provost of Worcester College, which was widely circulated at the time and has since passed through many editions. It is reprinted below (see Letter 11), but shorn of its Preface.

There was nothing now to keep him at Stadhampton except the disposal of his books, of which he had a large and valuable collection, including a *Thesaurus* of Stephanus, which had cost him eighteen guineas, and many valuable school and college prizes. These were packed up and sent to London, where their sale occupied three days. Of secular literature he retained only a Milton's *Paradise Lost*, a pocket Dante, and three slim volumes of Cowper, which had been given to him by his Irish love, and which have happily come down to me.

And then, to quote his own words, "like Abraham he went forth, not knowing whither he went, but esteeming with Moses the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, and little foreseeing either what the Lord in His providence would do for him, or in His grace do by him." He had no private income, no prospects. Almost every channel of employment was closed to him, and his health was, to say the least, precarious. He obeyed the Gospel injunction, "Leave all and follow Me," to the very letter. And if he scattered some bitter words in doing it, they may, perhaps, be forgiven him.

II. "O MY SINS! MY SINS! O ETERNITY! ETERNITY!"

I HAVE never seen it so stated in print, but to me there seems to be a world of difference between the Sense of Sin and the Conviction of Sin. The former, though no doubt most variable in degree and in some men sadly dormant, is an essential part of our common inheritance, as members of a flock. It is probably a biological necessity of the gregarious human soul, and only two things can kill it completely, the drug-habit and an assured self-righteousness. The Conviction of Sin, on the other hand, which Calvin, Knox and the Puritans, in their fatal misreading of human nature, would fain have made the general rule, is in reality a very rare exception, not quite, perhaps, as William Tiptaft once in a moment of discouragement declared it, "nearly as scarce as snowballs in midsummer and roses at Christmas," but still phenomenally rare. And yet, whether it be a psychological freak, a malady of the soul, as William James maintained, or an authentic spiritual experience, its pedigree dates at least as far back as the Book of Job, while the psalms and poetry in which it has been given voice are among man's holiest treasures and have brought comfort to many a sore and stricken heart. As to the rarity of the poignant emotions they express there can be no question. Preaching once in a populous town William Tiptaft is reported to have said, to the extreme annoyance of some of his hearers, "I wonder whether you could find me in this place fifteen persons who could give a good account of a work of grace in their souls." And, for other witness, fifty years ago the eminent Oxford professor, Dr. Max Müller, whose *Chips from a German Workshop* I well remember on my father's bookshelves, wrote to a valued friend of mine, long since dead, "I dare not call myself a Christian. I have hardly met ten men in all my life who deserved that name."*

What, then, is a Christian, to deserve the name? What, then, is a work of grace in the soul? And what, in fine, is the Conviction of Sin? According to William Tiptaft and my father, the two first must almost always include the last. The Conviction of Sin, I think they would have said, is the way, the surest if not the only way, by which God brings home vividly to men their fallen state by nature and their miserable insignificance in the scale of the universe as mortal bodies, in order that He may reveal to them in His own time and way their immense significance, and the great love He bears to them, as ransomed and ever-living souls. A man, in short, must have known himself for a helpless worm in the dust of earth, ere he can be esteemed worthy of a throne in heaven. On the former count, astronomers and physicists have many home-truths to tell us ; on the latter, they are wisely dumb. For it is not a scientific question, nor even a metaphysical one, although Kant from his attic in Könisberg extolled the moral sense in man and the sovereignty of grace. Rather is it matter for revelation, for the heaven-sent vision of prophet or seer. It was to Moses, not Aaron, it will be remembered, that Jehovah revealed His righteousness, and committed His law.

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* *Echoes of Larger Life*, p. 30. London, Jonathan Cape, 1929.

A German poet, who in his restless youth was almost persuaded to be a Christian, has left some well-known lines, more often quoted than grasped, which may faintly recall to the convicted sinner something of the fiery ordeal he has himself been through. "The man who has never watered his bread with his tears, nor sat weeping upon his bed night after miserable night, knows nothing of the Heavenly Powers"—and least of all, one may add, their frown.

Man's consciousness of sin in himself and in those around him, carrying with it an urgent desire for improvement and reform, has been, let us freely admit, one of the most effective forces in the world. The whole apparatus of religion is based upon it. Without the sense of sin, the Brahmins of Benares would soon be as bankrupt as the proud church of Rome, to say nothing of modest little Bethesda. It has founded monasteries, almshouses and hospitals past number, it engendered the Crusades, built those anthems in stone, the cathedrals, sent missions to the heathen, begot the United States of America, burnt the heretic, and freed the slave.

The Conviction of Sin has done none of these things. It is too much wrapped up in its own misery, in its own guiltiness before a righteous God. Later on, when he has found a blessed reconciliation, the convicted sinner will be driven by the grace in his heart to spend himself without thought of reward in help and service to his scattered brethren. But at first he can think of nothing but the wrath of God and his own despair. He neglects all his business, and slinks apart from his dearest friends to tramp the streets or the fields alone, a miserable outcast. "Whilst I was thus conflicting with the terrors of God," writes one, "oh! how I spurned the world, both its favours and frowns, and made no more account of men than grasshoppers." Man delights him not, nor woman neither. Nor food, nor sleep, nor comfort, nor repose. Some Influence has for the time annulled and overridden every normal instinct, even to the most fundamental of all, the will to live. Among the many records I have read there are few in which the sufferer has not at one time felt the horrible fascination of a rope, a razor, a cup of vitriol, or a sequestered pool. His misery is such that death, even with hell thrown in, would seem almost a welcome relief. But you will find it all set out frankly and faithfully in John Bunyan's "Grace Abounding"; in William Huntington's "Bank of Faith"; in the "Mercies of a Covenant God," by John Warburton, from which I shall soon be quoting, and, best of all, by Joseph Hart in what my father called the *golden* Preface to his Hymns, in his opinion "the most weighty piece of writing ever penned by man after the blessed Scriptures."

Loathsome to himself, the convicted sinner is not less scorned and hated by the world at large, which sees in him a disturbing challenge to almost everything upon which its worldly heart is set. For he judges it, not by its own indulgent canons of morality, but by an inexorable monitor within him. His conception of sin is not relative, but absolute, as absolute as the righteousness whereby it is condemned. "Every child of God," writes William Tiptaft, "has a judgment-seat set up in his own heart." Nevertheless, if he value his peace of mind, he will not declare it at Gath, nor publish it amongst the lip-servers, It will only irritate them. For the conscientious objector in wartime does not more inflame the patriot's ire than the convicted sinner stirs the bile of orthodox piety. Again, you will find it all in the Book of Job, whose conventional comforters have passed into a proverb. For none of his contemporaries can understand, or feel for the convicted sinner, unless they have themselves been passed through the same furnace. Long years, nay, centuries, must his body have rotted in the grave, before his soul can reap a meagre harvest of sympathy and understanding. Orthodox writers to this day rather grudge Augustine his sainthood, and the champions of the mediæval mystic invariably blue-pencil such of his confessions as remind them too painfully of the Mental Hospital. For it is there that you will find the

Conviction of Sin in its darkest, most distressing and most irretrievable form. There it is really a disease, a true insanity, mostly suicidal. Where, however, recovery takes place, where the reason has never been really dislodged, where the sinner has at length been delivered from the burden of his sin and has tasted God's pardoning love, he emerges, strangely enough, more sane than other people, most of whom, if the truth be told, harbour some pet delusion about themselves. The convicted sinner knows at least the truth about his "ego" and has been cured of boasting. He has shaken off his prepossessions and has acquired a sense of enduring values, such as otherwise only age and experience, and often not they, can give. He has been delivered from some at least of the "idola," to which Lord Bacon attributed most of the innumerable errors which infest the mind of man. He has learnt to see the world and all its vanities *sub specie eternitatis*, in the light of eternity. He has had the scales taken away from his eyes and the vail from upon his heart. God has made of him a sceptic, to believe only in Him and in His Word, in his own sins, and in "Eternity, Eternity."

Was there ever a more clear-sighted man than St. Paul, the classical example of the convicted sinner, after he had left all his sectarian prejudices behind him in the deserts of Arabia? Even so was Cromwell, the virulently hated, a singularly clear-sighted man, though his soul has had long waiting for men to do it justice. So was the not less vituperated Luther. So was John Bunyan, the gaol-bird. And so was the distinguished American divine, Principal Jonathan Edwards (born in the very same year as John Wesley), whose heart-felt confession of his sense of guilt I find warmly commended by my father in his Review of a cheap reprint of Edwards' *Spiritual Pride, its Deceitful Nature and Evil Fruits.**

"My wickedness, as I am in myself," he writes, "has long appeared to me perfectly ineffable, and swallowing up all thought and imagination like an infinite deluge, or mountain over my head. . . . When I look into my heart and take a view of my wickedness, it looks like an abyss, infinitely deeper than hell, and it appears to me that, were it not for free grace, exalted and raised up to the infinite height of all the fulness and glory of the great Jehovah, and the arm of His power, and grace stretched forth in all the majesty of His power, and in all the glory of His sovereignty, I should appear sunk down in my sins below hell itself . . . When I have had turns of crying and weeping for my sins, I thought I knew at the time that my repentance was nothing to my sin."

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* *Reviews*, Vol. I., p. 256.

Sooner or later, just as the dark night of the soul gives place to glorious dawn, so does the Conviction of Sin eventuate in a deliverance, an exhilaration, an ecstasy, as intense and overpowering as was the preceding gloom. Those who have experienced it all concur in describing it as far in excess of every other form of happiness known to mortal man. In proof whereof, and as a pendant to the above passage, read the following from John Warburton's *Mercies of a Covenant God.*

"I fell upon my knees under the hedge and cried out to the Lord, 'Am I deceived, Lord? Am I too secure? Is it wild-fire, Lord?' And the dear Lord broke in upon my soul with such divine glory, and such a succession of promises, that the Bible appeared to me to be nothing but promises from beginning to end, and all mine. I had such a view, too, of the faithfulness and glory of God in His fulfilment of them from first to last to my poor soul, that I was completely overwhelmed with transports of heavenly joy, and for a time scarcely knew whether I was in the body, or out of the body. Upon arising from the ground it struck me that it was the very place in which the devil had often tempted me to put an end to my life. And, oh! how I did dance and sing, and banter the lying devil, and dare him to come out of his den! I challenged him to his face, and told him if he did not come out he durst not. I called him everything but a gentleman. I was so happy and comfortable, that I felt as if I could walk through troops of devils, shouting, 'In the name of the Lord I will destroy them!' Oh! how I wondered at the goodness of the Lord to one so unworthy of the least of His mercies! 'If this,' cried I, 'be wild-fire, let me have more of it! If this is being too secure, let me live and die in it. My God and my Saviour, thou art my Portion, my Rock, my Hiding-place, my Friend, my dear Redeemer! Oh! my dear, dear, dear Jesus, Thou art the chief of ten thousand, the altogether lovely!' How I got home, I know not; what with shouting, praising, thanking and blessing the Lord, it was morning before I arrived there."*

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* Warburton, John. *Mercies of a Covenant God*, Fourth Edition, p. 23. London, 1859.

As we shall soon be making friends, I hope, with the man who wrote that fine bit of nervous prose, I will say no more of him now.

When William Tiptaft, Francis Newman, Charles Brenton, Henry Bulteel, John Kay, and, lagging after them, my father seceded from the Church of England, nothing was further from their thoughts than to join up with any other of the established sects, in which they discerned as little real spirituality and almost as much subservience to the world, as in the community which they had left. They had no sympathy with the political Church-breaker. As my father is found writing under the emotional strain of his secession, " I do not and, if God keep me in my present mind, durst not, and will not unite with political dissenters, radicals, papists, Socinians and infidels, to pull down the National Establishment by the arm of force. ' O my soul, come not thou into their secret ; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united ! ' "

Believing as they did in man's crying need of a natural religion, as distinct from that supernatural one which was the free gift of the Holy Spirit, they held that the interests of public morality were at least as safe in the hands of bishops and curates, as in those of ministers and conferences. " As we cannot give men spiritual religion," once wrote my father from his editorial chair, " and Methodism, or general Dissent presents greater opposition to the truth, we feel a preference, as a system of natural religion, for that quiet, respectable, jog-trot Church of Englandism, which seems best suited to the staid, sober-minded Englishman."*

Written as they were in 1855, when all but a handful of English clergy still preached in a black Geneva gown, and few had yet learnt to magnify their priestly office, the above remarks may raise a smile. But the fundamental difference remains. That man, even with all his striving, with all the help of the sacraments, and the periodical absolution of the priest, can ever be anything but a hell-deserving sinner, can ever come anywhere near to the Divine Perfection, was an assumption which, in my father's eyes and those of his friends, spelt deadly treason against the sovereignty of God and the all-sufficing merit of His Son, the Saviour. This accounts for my father's especial rancour against the Wesleyans, who teach and believe in Progressive Sanctification as firmly as ever did Keble, Newman, Pusey, or Cardinal Manning. According to his scathing estimate, "John Wesley was a man who sowed his tares in the Gospel field, and fought with all the desperate enmity of his crafty mind against the sovereignty of God,"* a truculent statement which I can only excuse by thinking of its author as a sentinel at the foot of the Cross, with his arrow made ready on the string against anyone, however eminent, who should seem by any sort of counterclaim to detract by even a hair's-breadth from the perfect work and all-sufficing merit of his adored and adorable Redeemer.

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* *Reviews*, Vol. I., p. 383.

But where to find a truly spiritual people, where the few convicted sinners, who taking for their guide the very words of their Lord and Master, were striving with the Holy Spirit's help to follow them? Such was the Seceders' quest. Steeped as they were in the spirit of the Psalms, the Gospels and the Pauline Epistles, they were seeking for men framed on the pattern of the Bible saints in the prosperous shires of pre-Victorian England. They were looking for "broken hearts, contrite spirits, emptied, stripped and humbled souls," Christians with the burden still on their backs, amongst a generation which was busily worshipping the golden calf, and mainly intent on building rail-roads and increasing its investments.

The wonder was that there were, that there should have been such people. They were not common, but they existed, *rari nantes in gurgite vasto*, scattered chips floating on a maelstrom. And religion had seized on most of them, had picked them out from their fellows, as if by a miracle. Let me give one instance.

During my father's first summer at Stadhampton, it is quite conceivable that trotting home to his rooms in Worcester College some Sunday evening after his work was done, he might have overtaken and passed on the way a humble exciseman, by name Nathaniel Marriner, who was wearily trudging back to Oxford after having been over to join some equally humble individuals in their simple worship at Wallingford. Twelve years later, as joint-editor of the *Gospel Standard*, my father was only too glad to collect and publish the posthumous letters of that same humble exciseman in his magazine, for he found them "simple, original, full of life and feeling, without either feigned humility or pre-

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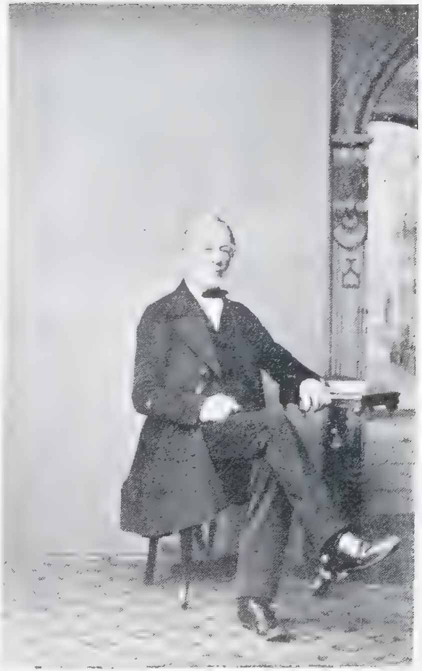
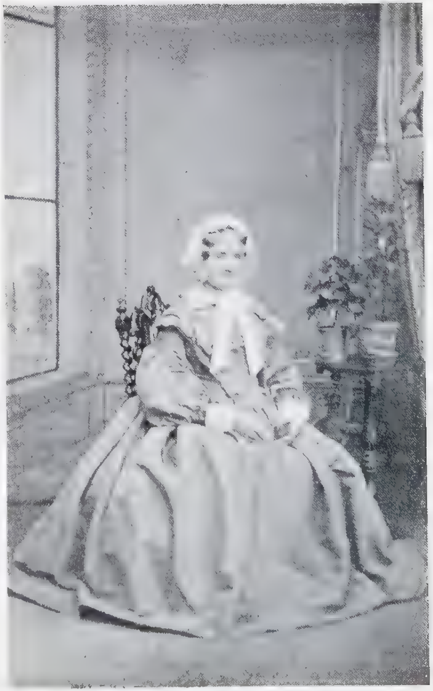
* *Reviews*, Vol. II., p. 56.



WILLIAM TOMBLIN KEAL, M.D.

(1792—1874).



DEBORAH WARD KEAL

(1791—1871).

sumptuous self-confidence." To pick out a sentence at random, "I sometimes have such a sense of my eternal justification," writes Nathaniel Marriner, "through the blood and righteousness of Christ, as almost to break my soul into a thousand pieces." Does not that ring true?

"This place, like others," he writes from Oxford of all cities, "is full of profession and pride; nor can I find many people here, who have been brought to seek the Lord. I heard of a little people at Wallingford, thirteen miles from here. I went over the other day, and I found two or three whose hearts were right with me, and I really believe with the Lord also. They are a savoury, unctuous and deep-led people. An old shoemaker, who had been in the way thirty-eight years, came with me six miles on my way back, and I can assure you we could hardly part. He is a most choice man, and one whose conversation is sweet, powerful and well-seasoned. I know if —— and —— had been with us, there would have been only one heart among all four," and he adds, "They meet together every Sunday and read Mr. Huntington's works, when they have no preaching. Mr. G. and Mr. W. speak to them occasionally. I should go every Lord's day, but I have no horse." He ends up, "My heart is with you to live, to die and to live again."*

Nathaniel Marriner may be taken as a fair instance of the "hungry souls, but fastidious feeders," to whom William Tiptaft and my father were to devote the rest of their lives. From Bere Regis where he was stationed before being transferred to Oxford, he writes, October, 1827: "In this place are two meetings. The ministers and people are full of blindness, ignorance, arrogance, presumption and awful rebellion against the sovereignty of God. I have been to hear them, and both times came home as hard and barren as a stone. And the Lord has fully brought my soul to a point, that this proceeding is dishonourable to His ever-blessed name, so that I dare not go near them again. . . . The ministers publicly tell the people to have nothing to do with me, for I am a dangerous fellow, and my sentiments are a scandal to the country."†

Can you not see the man? Honest in all his dealings, trenchantly sincere and truthful, a charming, sympathetic companion to those who think and feel with him, but to the world at large tiresome, opinionated, fanatical, and to all appearance full of the pride and presumption of which he accuses others. Men of his type, it must be admitted have only themselves to blame if they are not popular, for they are a thorn in the flesh to every village parson, a terror to every dissenting minister who is trying to keep his little flock together; as extreme in their arrogance, as in their abjection; very humble before God, but to no one else; now on contrite knees behind a hedge, now telling a Regius Professor to his face that he does not preach the Gospel, and now penning confessions like this of Nathaniel Marriner. "I was in such a state the week before last," he writes from Oxford, Feb., 1831, "with close trials within and heavy trials without, that I felt inclined to leave Wallingford altogether. The very devil stirred me up, till I got into such a state of awful rebellious peevishness, fretfulness and sullenness, that I was more like a demon, than one professing to be a partaker of the fear of the Lord. This caused me such grief of soul, such severe shame, such abhorrence, such sighs and deep searchings of heart, that I could not hold my head up the whole week afterwards. . . . Never did my inmost soul cry more earnestly for mercy."*

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* *Gospel Standard*, January, 1844, p. 10.

† *Ibid.* November, 1848, p. 350.

The Mr. G. and Mr. W. mentioned in the first extract as preaching at Wallingford were William Gadsby, who had a large chapel in Manchester, and John Warburton of Trowbridge, already mentioned. The sermons of William Huntington, S.S., which my father so highly esteemed, fulfilled the same office a hundred years ago as his own do now—i.e., in certain congregations they were read aloud in the absence of a minister.

"Among my Dutch friends," to quote from a letter recently received, "the works of J. C. Philpot are liked very much and in the absence of a minister they are read. . . . In the little gatherings in our circle in Holland and in America, when they are deprived of a minister, most of the sermons read at the services are by the late J. C. Philpot, translated in Dutch, and in all the religious papers they are advertized very extensively."

The letter is dated Kalamazoo, Michigan, U.S.A., January 5, 1929! How heart can speak comfortably to heart across the two-fold gulf of Time and Space!

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* *Ibid.* February, 1846, p. 49.

III. "LIBERTY FOR BONDAGE."

"*Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them.*"—MATTHEW xviii. 20.

"*The Lord's people is of the willing sort. They shall come unto Zion, and enquire the way to Jerusalem, not by force or compulsion, but with their faces turned thitherward.*"—
ROBERT BROWNE (born 1550 ?).

WHEN Nathaniel Marriner and the old shoemaker and a few humble friends gathered together in their Master's name to pray and read the Bible at Wallingford; when William Tiptaft built himself a chapel and eventually formed a church at Abingdon; when, at his instance, Mr. de Merveilleux did the same at Stamford, and my grandfather at Oakham, they were exercising a right which had been denied to the English laity for centuries, and had only been fully and finally conceded by the Toleration Act of 1689, after many lives had been sacrificed on the scaffold, on the gallows and on the stricken field. In the matter of Church-government they acknowledged no over-lord, save Christ alone. They were Independents, that is to say, Congregationalists, or "Brownists," the first man who had the vision and the courage to claim and to introduce such unconditioned liberty of worship having been a fiery and eloquent young Cambridge graduate, named Robert Browne, who was born at Tolethorpe Hall, near Stamford, during the short reign of Edward VI.

In these days of universal toleration it is difficult to realize that for most of the fifteen hundred "years of the Lord," which separate the two quotations at the head of this chapter, the first was treated as a dead letter, entirely as though such a gracious promise had never been given. If Sinners desired to gather together at the feet of their Friend, in the absence of an ordained priest, they had to do it by stealth and often at the peril of their lives. For the Means of Grace had been put in commission, and turned into a profitable monopoly, protected by the State, and that with even a tighter hand after the Reformation than before it. As Head of the Church, Queen Elizabeth proved herself more autocratic than any Pope, and chastised with scorpions all who presumed to question her absolute supremacy.

As the queen made slaves of the bishops, so the bishops, grafting on to prelacy a despotic rule derived from Geneva, made slaves of the people; and Robert Browne was the first to raise a protest, the first to realize, in the words of a recent writer, "the devastating discipline which an organized Church can exercise over the private mind."* Scandalized, like my father, but with even graver reason, to see whole parishes herded to church under heavy penalties, sheep and goats alike, to take the communion side by side, he, too, was driven to the conviction that "the Kingdom of God was not to be begun by whole parishes, but rather of the worthiest, were they never so few." But he was a voice crying in the wilderness, long years before his time. And here in England, where State and Church are still so entangled that neither dares to let go of the other, we have not yet caught him up.†

Robert Browne was born, by the way, in the same green and winding valley of the Guash as William Tiptaft (who had all his fervour and none of his defects), although just two hundred and fifty years earlier and at the very opposite end of the little county of Rutland. In the days of the Tudors, indeed, it is quite conceivable that the Tiptafts of Braunston may have laboriously grown some of the fine wool out of which those able and pious middlemen, the Brownes of Stamford, made their handsome fortune.‡

In his Article on the Puritans my father, writing without the advantage of later discoveries, pillories Robert Browne beside his cruel persecutor, Archbishop Whitgift, as "melancholy instances of the utter worthlessness of knowledge without grace."* And yet he admits that but for the ruthless persecution which fell on the "Brownists," and proved that religious liberty was unobtainable in England, no Pilgrim Fathers would probably have sailed in the *Mayflower* to found a spiritual democracy on the far side of the Atlantic.

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* When Browne took his degree at Cambridge in 1572, the University was under the almost inquisitorial sway of Cartwright, the Regius professor of divinity, who had brought back from Geneva Calvin's ideas of Church-discipline, and maintained that heretics ought to be put to death, whether they repented or not.

† It is only quite recently that Robert Browne's importance as a political thinker has been duly recognized. See Allen, J. W. *History of Political Thought in the Sixteenth Century*, pp. 223–30. London, Methuen, 1929.

‡ In her will, dated 1470, Agnes Browne, Robert's great-great-grandmother, left £75 to an unnamed priest "to sing for her continually for fifteen years"; also, four marks for "a cloth of silk and gold, with a valence of the same, to be borne with four petyt staves over the sacrament on Palm Sunday in the worship of the sacrament." Blore, Thomas. *Rutland.*

By a remarkable coincidence the Brownes died out in the male line with Francis Browne of Gretford Hall, the bachelor-friend and chief parishioner of my great-great grandfather, the Rev. Elias Lafargue, who committed his body to the grave inside Gretford church in 1751, only two years before his own, which had first seen the light in far Castillon, was laid to rest in the same ancient edifice.

Robert Browne tells us, in his "spiritual autobiography," discovered by the late H. M. Dexter in Lambeth Palace library, of all places in the world, that "he had no rest what he might do for the name and kingdom of God. He often complained of those evill dayes and with manie teares sought where to find the righteous, which glorified God, with whome he might live and rejoise together, that thei putt awaie abominations." But alas! through some fatal rashness of temper poor Robert Browne was never able to live and rejoice with any people, however righteous, for long at a time. He seems, indeed, to have been much more troubled by the sins and abominations he saw around him than by any that he discovered in his own heart. Nevertheless, it is to his credit that he was the first to think out a working compromise between communal and individual religion, and the little church which he and Robert Harrison founded at Norwich in 1580 supplied the model for all later Independent or Congregational Churches, including those which in the middle of the last century owed their origin mainly to William Tiptaft's arduous ministry.

Ever since the Bible was translated into the vulgar tongue, if not earlier, there have existed throughout Europe small and obscure bands of dissidents, the men predominating, who joining an earnest mystical temper to a strong anti-clerical bias, and inspired alike by the stern morality of the Old Testament and the passionate world-denial of the New, have insisted on worshipping apart in some hired room, or in times of persecution in woods and desert-places, under ministers chosen by and from amongst themselves, ministers often of remarkable native gifts, but usually with little more education if no less, than assiduous Bible-reading can confer. Of these the only one who has come to proverbial fame is John Bunyan, the inspired tinker of Elstow. Thriving sects have arisen out of these obscure separatists, usually losing in earnestness as they gained in prosperity, and eventually becoming, as William Tiptaft found them in his preaching-tour, "very worldly." And yet there has always been "a remnant," whether recruited from within or from without, who have persevered through trial and temptation in living soberly, righteously and godly even in this present world. And there always will be, for, as the hymn-writer has said,

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* *Reviews*, Vol. I., p. 230. *Gospel Standard*, Nov., 1853, p. 349.

"As fast as sheep to Jesus go,
Shall lambs recruit His folds below."

When my father and his friend left the Church of England, William Huntington, S.S., the inspired coal-heaver, who was one of the best-known of these self-taught ministers, had been dead some years, but many of his old hearers were still alive, to provide a leaven for other congregations. Of living ministers the three to whom our Seceders felt most drawn, as sharing their own doctrinal views and tenderness of conscience, were Henry Fowler of Gower-street Chapel, London, William Gadsby of Manchester and, above all, John Warburton of Trowbridge, all of them men who, born in obscure circumstances, and dowered with little learning, had collected around them devoted adherents. Of William Gadsby and his son John, with whom as founders of the *Gospel Standard*, my father was destined to be so intimately associated, I must defer speaking until a later opportunity. Henry Fowler died of consumption without reaching old age, December 16, 1838, and many years later my father had the privilege of publishing his *Experience*.*

John Warburton, who baptized my father six months after he left the Church, and who, for so long as he lived, remained the dear, devoted friend and counsellor of both my parents, demands a more detailed notice.

On his death at an advanced age in April, 1857, my father had the satisfaction of rendering "a last friendly mark of affection and respect to his memory," by preparing for the press an account of his last illness and release, in the Preface to which he gives the following interesting account of their earliest meeting.

"I shall never forget my first interview with Mr. Warburton, which was some time in the year 1833 or 1834. I was at that time a minister in the Church of England, and the solitude of a country village, with an entire exclusion from all worldly society, much

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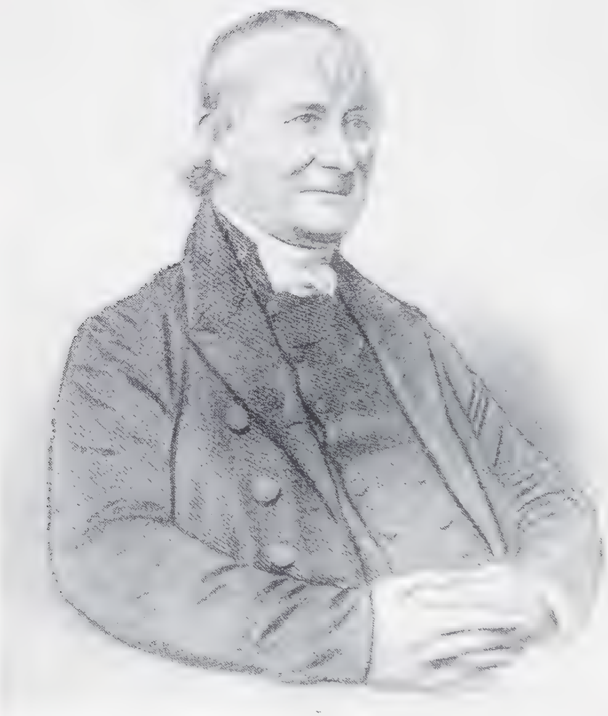
* *Gospel Standard*, Vol. XXX., 1864.



Yours in Love

John Warburton

JOHN WARBURTON

(1776—1857).

favoured prayer, meditation and reading the Scriptures. Powerful temptations also assailed my soul, and trials and sorrows of various kinds were spread in my path. I mention these matters to show how far my mind was prepared to break through those barriers of pride and prejudice, which separate the Churchman, and more especially the Clergyman, from the Dissenter, and to make me desirous of seeing and hearing a man of God out of my own narrow pale.

" Mr Warburton was to preach at the Chapel of my dear friend, Mr. Tiptaft, and I went over to Abingdon, about eight miles distant, to see and hear him . . . Though reared in the lap of learning, and instructed almost from childhood to consider mental attainments as the grand means of winning a position in the world, I had, some six or seven years before, been taught by the weight of eternal realities laid on my conscience, to value grace as the one thing needful ; and the trials and temptations I was passing through in a lonely village, separated from all society but that of a few people who feared God, had deepened the feelings in my breast. Under these circumstances I went to Abingdon, feeling my own want of grace and therefore with more fears than hopes, as about to see and hear a servant of God so eminently possessed of it, and anticipating rather a frown than a smile both in the pulpit and in the parlour.

" I afterwards learned that the poor dear man was almost as much afraid of meeting the Oxford scholar as the Oxford scholar was of meeting him. But how much better grounded were my fears than his ; and how much his grace outshone my learning !

" He received me, however, with much kindness and talked pleasantly and profitably on the weighty matters of the kingdom of God. I heard him very comfortably in the evening ; and next morning after breakfast he would have me engage in prayer, which I did with a trembling heart, but seemed helped to express simply what I knew or felt. We afterwards went inside the coach together to Dorchester, about seven miles off, conversing the chief part of the way, and there we parted very affectionately . . . . I afterwards heard that my feeble lispings had given me an abiding place in the dear man's heart, and laid a foundation for that friendship and union which have subsisted unbroken ever since between us. . . .

" I never met with a minister whose prayer in the pulpit, or whose conversation out of it, was so weighty and savoury.

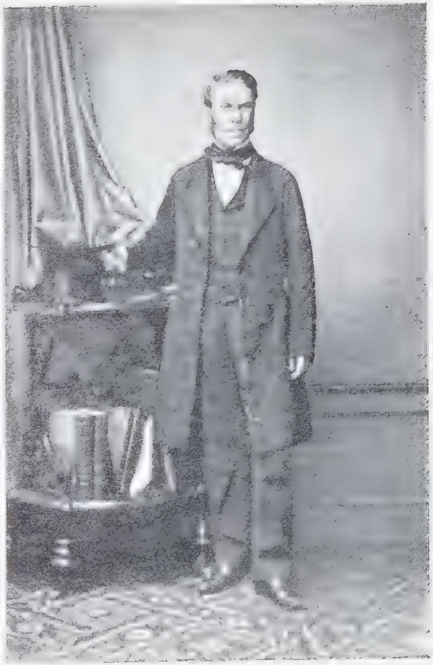
Indeed, I never heard a man ask a blessing at the breakfast or dinner table like him. There was such a simplicity, such a reverence, and yet childlike approach unto God ; such a savour in his few words, that it seemed to sanctify the meal in a peculiar way."

In writing to Joseph Parry, September 13, 1837 (see Letter 25) my father relates what quite unnecessary trouble it had cost him to prepare for the press a certain MS. by John Warburton. This, subsequently published under the title *Mercies of a Covenant God*, is doubtless well known and appreciated by many of my present readers, and it deserves a permanent place in the literature of the spirit. It is, in my father's words, " a living experience of the trials and afflictions of forty years, written in a most simple, feeling and savoury way—not with wisdom of words, but in the very language of the heart itself."

Born in 1776, John Warburton was originally a poor Lancashire weaver, who worked at his loom in a damp cellar, living a hand-to-mouth existence at a time when flour cost sixpence a pound, and barley had become the staple food of the poor. He had a prolific wife and young children, who often went supperless, if not dinnerless, to bed, their father imploring God to take away their appetites. He had had little schooling, but got to know his Bible by heart, and certain gifts of feeling, expression and character, greatly enhanced as they were by grace, led a few people scarcely richer than himself to offer him four shillings a week to pray and preach for them in a hired room. Gradually his reputation spread, and more and more people found that they heard him with profit. Eventually he received a call to Trowbridge, where a chapel was built for him, and there he continued to pray and to preach for over forty years, ruling his church and congregation with a very firm, but kindly hand. In order that he might supplement his very modest stipend he was encouraged to go on preaching-tours, and he was one of the few ministers who could be counted on to fill the big London chapels.

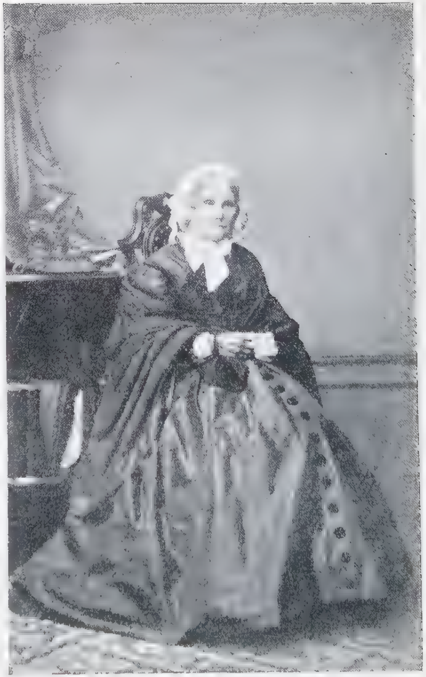
In redemption of my promise to return to the vexed queston of Arminianism *v*. Antinomianism, I will here give as good an instance as could be found of John Warburton's simple, but impressive style.

" One who professed to be my friend," he writes of an incident in his younger days, " told me that he was afraid I was turning Antinomian. ' Antinomian ! ' said I, ' what sort of



JOSEPH PARRY

(1801--1871).



ANN PARRY

(1795—1871).

people are they ?' 'They are those,' replied he, 'who deny the moral law to be the believer's rule of life, which is a most awful doctrine, and leads to all manner of sin.' 'Moral law,' said I, 'What is that ?' 'It is that just and holy law of God,' replied he, 'in which He commands us to love and obey Him.' 'What?' asked I, 'Do you mean that law which Paul meant when he said, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them" ? Do you take that law to be your rule of life ?' asked I. 'Surely I do,' said he, 'and all those who do not are Antinomians.' 'Then,' said I, 'I am one of those Antinomians. Blessed be God! He has delivered me from that law. Christ has obeyed it for me, and has been made a curse for me, and has gone to the end of it for my poor soul.' I asked him how he felt that law, what it did for him when he was under it, and how he had been delivered from it. Upon this subject he could say nothing, but he maintained, that believers were required to be obedient to the law, as well as to believe in Christ. But I insisted on it that there was obedience and blessed obedience, too, in Christ, which did my soul good, pleased God, honoured the law, pardoned all my sins, confounded the devil and made my soul dance for joy. I told him it was my meat and drink to do the will of my God and Saviour, who had done so great things for me. 'When I was under the law,' said I, 'I had no obedience, but was full of anger, rebellion and wretchedness, and sometimes felt such wrath that I could have pulled the Almighty from His throne for not having made me a beast that has no soul to appear before so holy a God, who cannot acquit the guilty. But now, having been delivered from the law, and having the love of the Lord Jesus Christ shed abroad in my heart I can believe in Him, obey Him, praise Him, thank Him and adore Him night and day.'" *

It may here be added, that next to being called a Mystic, mysticism being far too vague a term to describe his very definite experiences, nothing exasperated my father more than to be accused of Antinomianism. "Antinomian presumption," he writes, "is the hydra of our professing day, the damning sin of Calvinists, as self-righteousness is that of Arminians."† Again, 'God has no Antinomians in His family—that is, in the bad

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* *Mercies of a Covenant God*, p. 24. Fourth edition. London, 1859.

† *Letters*, p. 145.

sense of the word. He has no loose, licentious, reckless characters, who 'continue in sin that grace may abound.' A living soul may fall, and fall foully, but he cannot live in sin. Sin is a hell to him—a hell in his conscience; and 'who can dwell with everlasting burnings?' Who will not 'flee from the wrath to come'? And therefore if there be any professor of religion, or professor of high doctrines, who lives in sin, that man is no child of God; he is a child of the devil, a double-dyed, treble-distilled hypocrite. He has not the fear of Jehovah in his heart; for He puts His fear in their hearts, that they may depart from evil."[†]

IV. ALLINGTON. (A)—Through the Eyes of a Child.

"Water-meadows at the bottom, cornland going up towards the hills, those hills being *downland*, and a farmhouse in a clump of trees, sheltered on every side but the South." Such roughly was Allington—to borrow the description of his ideal home in a Wiltshire vale by no less an authority than William Cobbett, of the *Rural Rides*. But to me, as a little boy in petticoats, when Florence Nightingale was the idol of the day, Allington was far, far more than that. It was a magic land flowing with milk and honey, and loving-kindness, where for a whole month my parents, and especially my gentle mother, were manifestly happy and wonderfully at home. In highly orthodox Stamford my father was the reverse of popular. The many clergy of the town and neighbourhood, and there are few rural districts where they are more thick upon the ground, regarded him as a schismatic, a separatist, a renegade, a traitor to his cloth. I doubt if they ever knew that, month by month from his modest home in Rutland Terrace, his words were carried far beyond these shores; but they saw the people flocking to his chapel, and tramping or driving in from distant villages, to crowd it all the more. The comparison was odious. One new-comer, greatly daring, began to preach in his surplice and put candles on the altar, the first time such a thing had been seen in Stamford since the Reformation. But something had to be done.

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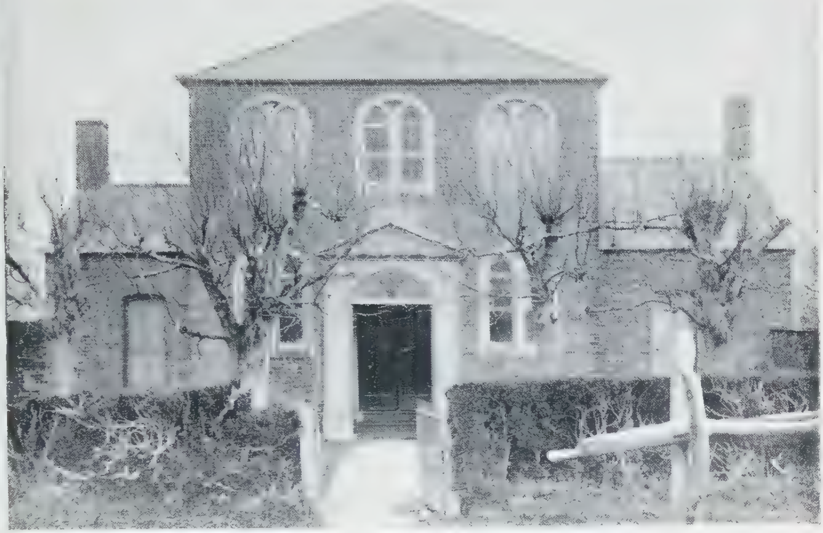
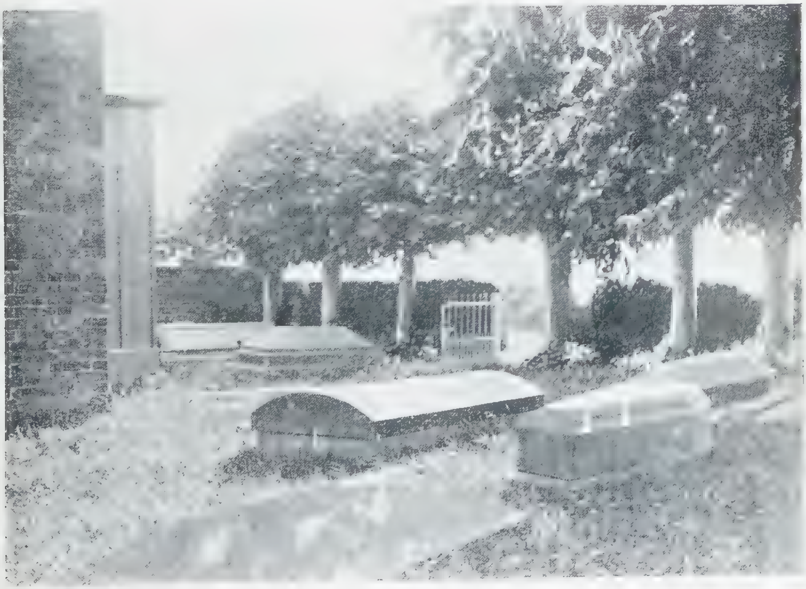
[*] *Early Sermons*, Vol. I., p. 6. London, Farncombe, 1906.



ALLINGTON CHAPEL
(In Winter).



ALLINGTON GRAVEYARD
(In Summer).

At Allington all was different. No church, or clanging church-bells at all hours of the day ; no pompous ecclesiastics to look down their noses at the young dissenter ; no vinegar-lipped spinsters a few doors off ; no vote-exacting magnate in his Tudor palace, with myrmidons in his pay to chase the young birds'-nester helter-skelter from his woods ; but only the unpretending little chapel by the wayside, hiding its homely face behind its leafy strip of grave-yard, with Joseph Parry, as modest and unassuming, for its chief deacon and supporter. The bluff, weather-bitten farmer with the warm heart and the tender conscience partly owned and wholly ruled the little hamlet, looked up to by all but subordinate to none, except to a shadowy landlord, of whom he held some of his sunny sheep-walks, and who now and then drove across half the county in his gamboge travelling chariot to talk farm-gossip over a saddle of four-year-old Southdown and a bottle of East India sherry. For Allington sits on the very instep of the Downs, tucked away in a sunny fold just where they soar at their steepest out of the unfenced levels of Pewsey Vale. The feel of the Downs is always there, like the feel of the Sea at the seaside, and the cool down-winds sweep over it with almost the snap of a Margate breeze. From there, too, at the cost of a breathless climb, you may launch your mortal shallop on to a green solitude, steer where you will, stretch eye-strings and heart-strings to the cracking-point, and listen in an enraptured silence, broken only by the occasional tinkle of a sheep-bell, to the breathing of a thousand hills. In the dim blue distance, fifteen miles away to the North, lies Swindon, at that time our nearest station.

Pausing on the lip of the scarp before you scramble down again, you have Allington at your feet, a small, compact green jewel of elms and orchards, set on the very edge of the wide brown plain, with here and there a whitewashed gable blinking in the sun and sending up a blue incense-spire into the crystalline air. Just beyond the emerald hamlet, threaded to it almost like necklace to pendant, is a sinuous sky-blue line,—a length of baby-ribbon, it might be, carelessly dropped on to the carpet—the Kennet-and-Avon canal, hugging the feet of the Downs, as it curls away to Devizes, six miles to the West, to throw itself headlong by some thirty locks into the Avon valley.

Besides the chapel, Allington consisted when I was a child of a dozen or more old thatched and lime-washed cottages, each standing well back from the shady lane behind its flowered apron; of the low polygonal farmhouse with its deep thatched eaves, where Mr. Parry first received my father, and whither he retired again in his old age; of the solid box-like Victorian edifice, built for him when he was burnt out of the other, between the rambling farm-steadings and the big orchard, garrisoned against small bare legs, as I remember to my cost, by spiteful geese and turkeys; and of one other low glorified cottage in a secluded garden, aflame to my memory with tulips, where lived Mr. Tuckwell, the junior deacon, and whither I was taken most mornings for some make-believe lessons. And to think that it was only the other day, when I took to poring over old records, that I actually realized what deep heart-searchings, what travail of spirit, what hidings and shinings of God's face all that peaceful loveliness could cover!

A short dip of gritty, sun-baked road takes you down from the cool elm-tree shade across the swing-bridge over the canal to lush water-meadows and spreading hedgerows, with wild-roses, birds' nests, butterflies, and I know not what other enchantments of a child's paradise. Left to themselves until the hay is in, these fields become at sheep-washing a scene of bucolic bustle. To a chorus of Doric chaff the brown-armed sheep-washers lower themselves to their midriffs into wooden bins, which are sunk in the dry channel almost level with the surrounding meadow. The sluices are drawn, in rushes the brown canal water, and swirls around them. Then with bleatings and shoutings and thwackings innumerable, accentuated by the staccato barks of tense-eared sheep-dogs, the reluctant wool-bearers, fresh from the liberty of the Downs, are forced to take the water, two or three at a time, and each is poled with a clothes-prop to its appointed place. Hour by hour the busy laundering goes on, until hundreds have received immersion, have left their sinful ticks in the cleansing stream, and have clambered clumsily ashore, to shiver and drip on to the trampled daisies. The July sun is overhead, the sky is all a-glitter with lark-song, and the warm air heavy with the reek of live mutton, when mother, the two Miss Parry's and I, our senses cloyed, saunter home to midday dinner hand in hand up the gritty road, all pocked with tiny hoof-prints.

Sometimes on still evenings, shadowed persistently by a quivering haze of midges, we saunter along the level tow-path —one of my father's chosen solitudes before a sermon—and watch the painted barges dawdle past, their occupants apparently taking their ease as if life were one long clay-pipe holiday. New-daubed with lemon-yellow, scarlet, white and a hard sky-blue, they seem to a child's eye to hail from the same Brobdingnagian toy-shop as the big vans of Wombwell's menagerie, the swings and roundabouts at Stamford fair, and the heraldic chariot of Mr. Parry's noble landlord.

Except for those stealthy wayfarers, the barges, and for a chance tramp or tourist on his way over the downs, Allington knows no through-traffic. It lies at the end of all things, at the very bottom of the pocket. Scarcely a murmur seems to come from the outer world to trouble the peace that has nested there for centuries. It was not always so. A few fields off, at a couple of spits deep, you may dig up by the score spindle-whorls, fibulæ, hammerstones, pot-sherds, fragments of crucible, etc., dating back to the iron-workers of the Hallstadt age, who thronged the place before the Romans came. A Sabbath-day's journey distant lie Silbury Hill and all that is left of the big temple of Avebury. But the noisy iron-smelters have long-since disappeared. Gone, too, are the white-robed Druids, leaving no successors ; not even so much as a resident minister. For the little chapel has to be content with such itinerant preachers as Mr. Parry can persuade to come that way—old John Warburton, from Trowbridge; a tall, lank, soft-voiced watchmaker from Cirencester; William Tiptaft, or my father. For, as the last has declared, " The call to the ministry is as *sovereign* as the call by grace, and Jehovah will take the tinker from his barrow and the cobbler from his stall, and send them to preach His word, as He took Elisha from the plough, and Amos from gathering sycamore-fruit." When no such preacher can be procured, a handful of the faithful assemble on the Lord's Day in the big table-pew to pray and sing, as best they can, and to hear a deacon read the word of truth, followed by the printed sermon of some godly minister.

But when the news has gone forth on the pink wrapper of the *Gospel Standard*, or by word of mouth, that there is to be a preaching, especially when it is my father who, for three or four hours (with an interval for refreshment) is to occupy the pulpit, Allington bestirs itself, and becomes the hub of its little world. Gigs and sociables trundle in by the score from the distant farms and villages of Pewsey Vale, and are parked in the shady lanes, while room for their steeds is found in Mr. Parry's straggling sheds—on one occasion, it is recorded, he put up as many as two score and five. Peasants trudge in from miles around, bringing their dinners with them, till, even the gallery being full, the chapel overflows into the little graveyard, and the late-comers join in the hymns and listen to the long prayer and longer sermon through the wide-open casements. A miserable urchin bears it all as best he can, perched on a little seat fixed high up on the wall of the big square table-pew, in full view of the whole congregation, whence every uncontrollable fidget is reflected back on him from five hundred reproachful or commiserant eyes. Each of the five little Parrys and of the four little Philpots has occupied in turn that coign of vantage. The two-hour service over, there is much vigorous hand-shaking outside, with hearty greetings in broad Wessex, and the better-clad straggle down the road to where, during the interval, Mr. and Mrs. Parry keep open house. Their guests have to be fed in relays. Betweenwhiles, to the clatter of plates indoors, you may see them solemnly pacing the big orchard, "con gl'occhi tardi e gravi," their dreamy eyes fixed on the ground, as they discourse, not of the current price of corn and wool, or the ravages of the turnip-fly, but of the dearth or plenty in their souls, of the snares and wiles of Satan, and how far the morning's sermon has met their several needs.

This is how I remember it all, or wish to remember it. But alas! 'tis only a sort of Watteau picture, life seen from the bank by a child, leaving out of count all the days of ceaseless toil, the cold nights spent under the stars at lambing-time, the fight against sheep-rot and rust, all of which had to be met, in order to convert the Almighty's bounty of down and field into wool for West-country looms and corn and mutton for Devizes market. These never-ending toils and anxieties, of which we get ample hints in my father's letters to Joseph Parry, doubtless go on still, as they have done for centuries. But the pious fervour has subsided like a record flood, remembered only by the oldest inhabitant. So long, however, as Joseph Parry lived and reigned, Allington kept up its name for heart-searching piety and generous farmhouse fare. It was a puritan Little Gidding, a pocket Geneva, where uncompromising Calvinism could be studied in pure culture, as little contaminated as possible by the infectious germs of worldliness and self-seeking

Summer after summer, from 1835 until 1869, the year of his death, all through the hungry forties and the halcyon Victorian days, my father went there for a month before or after the hay harvest, and took his wife and the reigning baby, so long as there was one, with him. How vividly I recall those happy migrations; my father standing on the low Stamford platform, in tall silk hat and poncho, patient and dignified, withdrawn into himself; my beautiful mother flushed and a little "cumbered" like Martha, till she has us safe on board, yet always with an alert blue eye for any oddity in the crowd. Then long hours on the old broad-gauge, in a half-compartment almost as inviolable as a private post-chaise, with a party-door which a restless imp could latch and unlatch to his heart's content until bidden to desist. Poor as he was, it never occurred to my father that gentle-people could travel other than first, with a half-crown for the guard, who handed down our luggage from our own carriage-roof. So I remember delicious sleepings and wakings, curled up on the wide drab-cloth cushions, and feastings out of little surprise packets, or on "Banbury cakes," the very cry of which will thrill me to this day, while my mother, radiantly happy,—for is she not speeding away from sneers to smiles, to holiday plenty from incessant pinch?—sings to me, or makes up little jingling rigmaroles, which bring a wintry smile even to her husband's meditative eyes.

Then, the long weary drive from Swindon, under the hood of the phaeton, smelling of the harness-room, behind the fat carriage-horses, and the Dickensian welcome on the doorstep from Mr. and Mrs. Parry and the two grown daughters, who, to relieve my mother, take immediate possession of me, to wash and brush and put me to bed by turns. Then, to wake up to a sunny morning and the jubilant farmyard cackle! What a lump of emotion is the common barn-door fowl! Then, to canter through the crisp morning air over the trackless downs, perched up before Mr. Parry on his saddle-bow! Or hanging on desperately to his kind, rough hand, to watch the four huge yoke-oxen come in from the plough, breathing hard and steering straight for the water-trough, like fishing-boats to harbour. Or, after waiting for the crimson embers to be raked out from the big bread-oven, and for the batch of cream-faced globes of dough to be ladled in, to feel myself lifted up in stalwart arms and gingerly to push in a baby loaf, all for my own consuming, before the iron door clangs to.

But enough! For were I to tell all I remember of Allington, I should never have done.

V. ALLINGTON. (B)—Through the Heart of a Man.

"I do not fear but that the Lord will take care of me."—June 17, 1835.

"Oh! my unbelieving heart, which pictured a thousand gloomy things never yet realised, as sickness, poverty and almost a parish workhouse!"—February 26, 1840.

That, when thrown upon the world, broken in health, sorely exercised in spirit, and with only a few banknotes between him and penury, my father should have found such kind, generous and hospitable friends as Mr. and Mrs. Parry, and such a peaceful, comfortable home as Allington, reads more like a scene from a story-book than a bit of the life one knows.* Nevertheless, as we shall see, for a man of his sensitive nature the situation, providential as it might seem, presented elements of doubt and difficulty, in spite of Joseph Parry's warm-hearted devotion, and his own firm belief, except at his darkest hours, in a God who actively governs His world, writes each man's story to its most intimate detail with His own hand, and ends it up happily, or the reverse, according to His predestined purpose. "I do not fear," he confides to his sister, "but that the Lord will take care of me." And take care of him He did most marvellously, though never for long without "laying upon him His afflicting hand." "There are many places," he adds, "which would be willing to have me, were I willing to go." But none could offer such unique advantages as the isolated Wiltshire hamlet, with its "prophet's chamber," long since ready swept and garnished for him.

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* Joseph Parry was nearly two years older than my father, having been born at Allington, Feb. 23, 1801, presumably in the old farmhouse at that time in the occupation of his father. He and his wife had married comparatively young, and there were four children in the nursery when my father first stayed with them in 1835. He survived my father by a little more than two years, his widow dying six months later, and they were buried in the same grave in the forecourt of the little chapel. There is a very sympathetic *Memoir* of them in the *Gospel Standard* for January, 1872 (Vol. XXXVIII., p. 37) from which I extract the following: "In Joseph Parry's character there was a singular dignity, coupled with great humility. He was one who could be loved, but certainly not one that any person would have felt inclined to take liberties with. His heart was large and generous. Indeed, we may almost use the word princely, not referring to the means, but to the will to be liberal. He was ever ready to forward the Lord's cause, sending ministers about the country to help the causes which stood in need of it. He was a man of excellent judgment in divine things, both as respects men and doctrines. His own religion had passed through fire and water."

Mrs. Parry was, in her husband's words, "a meek, quiet, gentle woman, honourable and consistent in her walk and conversation." She had a beautiful face, as may be seen from her portrait. I remember her as kindness itself, and a dear indulgent friend to us all.

When I myself first knew Allington, the pride of twenty summers had passed over it, and my father had so firmly established himself in the confidence of his thousands of hearers and readers, that Envy had begun to carp and mutter "Pope." But when he first set foot in Wiltshire in the early summer of 1835, with only Joseph Parry and William Tiptaft for his sponsors, it was as a new and untried man, whom his very birth and education, to say nothing of fine linen and Oxford manner, were calculated to render all the more suspect to the old-established ministers and congregations—for they could hardly as yet be called a sect—with whom he was inclined to throw in his lot. So that, altogether apart from his natural hesitation at quartering himself indefinitely on the Parrys and perhaps of having to take to his bed in the "prophet's chamber," as in the event he did, he was troubled by doubts and fears as to how far his message would find acceptance. As regards his host, except on the crucial question of baptism, he need have had no misgivings. But his prospective hearers, the Wiltshire farm-hands and peasants, were an unknown quantity. "As you yourself have often remarked," we find him writing to Joseph Parry at a later date, "I need a little time before people can receive my ministry, or enter into my drift. Half a dozen sermons are not enough to make it evident." It is considerations such as these which give their poignant interest to the two rather prickly letters which he addressed to his friend before and after his first visit to Allington (Letters 12 and 14).

As it turned out, instead of staying over only one Lord's day at Allington, my father ended by staying five, and actually promised to return in September for a visit of indefinite duration, after the strenuous days of the harvest were over. By this time his younger sister was already a mother, and on her husband, Capt. S. Ross Watts, being appointed to the guard-ship at Plymouth, *H.M.S. Royal Adelaide*, my impulsive grandmother had left her quiet berth at Walmer and with her elder daughter and invalid son had set up house at Stoke, Devonport, which henceforth became her home. And it was thither that my father went for a brief rest, and to prepare himself for one of the gravest decisions of his life.

Should he be baptized, or not? Should he, or should he not, submit himself to what, short of a martyr's death, is perhaps the severest test that can be applied to the sincerity of a man's Christianity? On the one hand, we find him writing to his friends at Stadham: "All forms, opinions, rites, ceremonies and notions to me are nothing, and worse than nothing; they are the husks which the swine eat, not the food of the living soul. To have the heart deeply penetrated with the fear of Jehovah, to be melted and filled with a sweet sense of dying love and atoning blood, to have the affections warmed and drawn forth under the anointings of the Eternal Comforter, this is the only religion that can suit and satisfy a regenerate soul." (Letter 15.) Moreover, the man he most revered amongst the dead, W. Huntington, as well as many other true followers of Christ, living and dead, had not been Baptists. On the other hand, if he could make up his mind to submit, it would best suit his own comfort and convenience. It was the path of least resistance, and therefore the most to be distrusted. The little chapel at Allington was pledged to baptism by its trust-deeds and it was not to be expected that its rustic congregation would consent to sit indefinitely under an unbaptized minister. If the thing on which Joseph Parry had long since set his heart was to find fulfilment, if my father was to make Allington his permanent home, he must be baptized, or else be thrown on the world again. No wonder he was driven this way and that, a prey to conflicting motives.

"You speak of the baptizing," he writes to Joseph Parry on the eve of his return. "But I have many doubts and fears respecting it. First, I feel my miserable unbelief, sinfulness, hardness of heart, backslidings, ignorance of Christ and manifold corruptions as most powerful obstacles in the way. Secondly, my poor, weak, shattered, tottering, cold-catching body fills me with many apprehensions. But I trust if I saw Jesus one side the water I should venture through. I seem now to have missed the most favourable opportunity during the warm weather we have just had. But I would add that, if I am to go through the ordinance this year, it must not be pushed into the autumn. September 13 is the last Sunday I could submit to it, and I do assure you I shall be very thankful to escape with a cold. I asked Mr. Warburton to baptize me, if I should go through the ordinance, and should not wish any other. If then he is able to come to Allington on September 13, I would, the blessed Lord enabling me, follow the example of the great Head of the Church, in passing through the waters of Jordan." (Letter 14.)

It will be noticed that he is careful to speak of the rite as an "ordinance," and not as a "sacrament." Indeed throughout his life he maintained that Baptism and the Lord's Supper were not sacraments at all, as the Churches of Rome and of England, though not that of Scotland, consider them, i.e., immediate channels of divine grace, but *ordinances*, celebrations or memorials of our Lord's sacrifice, death, burial and resurrection, "which might or might not be attended by a divine blessing, but were not channels of spiritual life."*

"You ask how I was convinced of believer's baptism," he writes (January 9, 1840) to a young brother-minister who was exercised on the point. "When the subject first arrested my mind, I turned from it with enmity, as I saw it was like a man coming to cut down my apple-tree, which bore the golden apples. This was evident, that if believer's baptism was the only scriptural one, I must relinquish my connection with a system that was based on infant sprinkling. But this I had neither inclination, nor faith to do, especially as my health was indifferent and all my income derived from the Establishment. Still, however, as I read the Scriptures, I could see neither precept, nor example of any other baptism, and together worked with this the awful mockery of the Church of England's service for sprinkling infants, which, however, I escaped, as having an assistant who did that as well as all other formal work. Some friends of mine, too, at this time seceded from the Establishment and were baptized, and as I still maintained equally friendly relations with them, we sometimes conversed upon it, and my convictions were still more strengthened, till they outgrew and outweighed all bonds and shackles, and forced me out of Babylon. I was baptized six months after I left the Establishment and have never swerved from believing it to be a Gospel Ordinance, though I feel little disposed to make a shibboleth of it, or make it a prominent topic of my ministry. The way in which many Baptists bring it forward I much object to, as though it were the all-in-all and the grand turning-point, whereas I rather regard it as an Ordinance to be obeyed from divine teaching and love. 'If ye love Me, keep My commandments.' But some of my dearest friends and best hearers are not Baptists, nor has this come in as a bar, or a stumbling-block between our friendship and love. I cannot, however, agree to make it an indifferent thing, and in our zeal for spiritual substances, to set aside the Lord's clear command, and the apostles' undoubted practice, as nullities and shadows. Jesus is a lawgiver to His chosen and they honour Him little who despise His precepts."*

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* *Gospel Standard*, Jan. 1867, Vol. XXXIII., p. 22.

Scarcely more than a year after he had himself been baptized he writes to Joseph Parry (Letter 22): "Let us not have separated from ungodly systems and dead professors on account of doctrines only and outward ordinances, however true and scriptural: neither let these things, especially the latter, break the union between the family of God. I am a decided Baptist, but I can stretch my hand across the water to God's children whose eyes are not open to see the ordinance, whilst there are thousands of Baptists to whom I would not willingly hand a chair."

Lastly, in a defence of "strict communion," he wrote: "I know from experience that baptism is a very heavy cross, and I can honestly say that I felt it a much keener trial to be baptized, than to leave the Establishment. I was tempted in body and soul, in the first to think I was a hypocrite and, in the second, to believe I should have an inflammation of the lungs, or a pleurisy, and so die. I know very well I should have shunned the cross, if I dared."†

But he did not dare, and on September 13, 1835, his thirty-third birthday, he was baptized in Allington Chapel by the old Lancashire weaver. "About a week back," he tells his friends at Stadham, " I was privileged to follow the dear Lord through the waters of Baptism and never more sensibly felt my unworthiness than on that day. He was pleased to keep me from taking the least cold, to give me more confidence to step into His watery grave than I could have expected from my many bodily and spiritual temptations and exercises. Mr. Warburton preached and baptized me with the greatest solemnity, unction and affection."

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* *Letters*, p. 146. London, 1871.

† *Gospel Standard*, May, 1840, Vol. VI., p. 101. *Strict Communion Vindicated*, p. 10. London, Farncombe, 1920.

A few months later, it is worth noting, his former friend, Francis Newman, whose career up to a point ran strangely parallel to his own (for he too spent more than a year as a private tutor in Ireland and resigned his Oxford Fellowship for conscience' sake), was baptized in the old Chapel at Broadmead, he being then Classical lecturer at Bristol College. The regrettable sequel may be read in his *Phases of Faith*.

William Tiptaft's instinctive attitude to baptism is still more significant. I can find no allusion to it in all his copious letters of this period, nor does he ever speak of his own baptism, or give a hint that his new chapel at Abingdon was being furnished with a baptistery, though I presume that it must have been. He mentions casually that Mr. Husband, the ex-vicar of a neighbouring parish whose secession preceded his own, had licensed his house for divine worship, and was baptizing in a mill-dam close to his old church, an old lady of eighty being amongst the baptized. In July, 1834, he writes : " I spoke to a large multitude assembled together to see Husband baptize four members. I was enabled to speak plainly on the occasion." And he adds : " We still talk about baptizing and forming a church here (at Abingdon), but there are so few that I can fully receive in heart and I feel myself so unfit for a pastor . . . . There is nothing worth living for in this vain world. Vanity is stamped upon all created good, and my desire is to die to the world and to be alive unto God." The great question for him is " Are we in the right way ? Is life communicated to our souls ? What is all our preaching, reading, praying and professing, if we have not the root of the matter in us ? " No mention either of Baptism, or of the Lord's Supper! Year followed year and they were still talking of the matter.

It was not indeed until January, 1843, more than eleven years after he had left the Church, that William Tiptaft was finally able to overcome his scruples, and before a " very large concourse of people both times," to baptize seven women and five men after the morning service, and six women and five men in the afternoon. "What a different feeling I had in going down from the pulpit to baptize," he writes, "from what I used to experience when I had to descend from the pulpit in the Church of England to sprinkle infants, and to give a flat contradiction to what I stated in the pulpit respecting regeneration, etc., at the same time encouraging the blind and ignorant godfathers and godmothers in their sin and mocking of God, who came forward so boldly and carelessly to make such awful vows and promises. I am satisfied that many things may be bought too dear, even gold; but one thing cannot, which is a good conscience."

How strikingly the sudden relief to his burdened conscience was rewarded, as he lay in bed that night, with "a melting of heart and a sweet sense of God's love to his soul," is fully recorded in his letters (No. XLVII).

To return to my father, "When first he came amongst us," wrote Joseph Parry in words already quoted (*vide* page 102), "he was very close and searching in his preaching, and it was enough to make a living man tremble . . . . Some, when returning home would sit down on the roadside and say, 'Well, we can never stand this searching preaching, it cuts us up root and branch'." Amongst those who felt themselves thus "searched," and were inclined to resent it, was actually the junior deacon, Joshua Carby Tuckwell, who shared with Joseph Parry the onus of maintaining the little "cause." The son of a naval officer who after playing a conspicuous part in Lord Rodney's great victory off Guadeloupe (April 12, 1782) had left the service and taken a farm in Wiltshire, Mr. Tuckwell, as I remember him, was a spare little figure, very neat and precise, whom I always associate with tulips as red as his face, and with "pot-hooks and hangers," for was it not he, dear man! who first taught me to hold a pen? By that time he had become one of my father's staunchest allies, but it was only after much heart-searching, and if the little deacon had not been of a most gentle and forgiving spirit, I doubt whether the fiery young evangelist would ever again have shown his face in Allington pulpit.

Writing more than thirty-two years later, after he had laid his old friend to rest in the little graveyard on the very eve of his own sixty-fifth birthday, my father admits that owing to his own deep exercises of spirit, his ministry when he first went to Allington was of a very separating and searching character, "and having much zeal and warmth, as most young soldiers have, I used to cut away right and left, without fearing foe or sparing friend, if I thought him wrong. In this spirit and with this ministry, I went to Allington, where I found a people both there and in the neighbourhood, who had been accustomed to smoother tidings than those which I brought, and as I thought sunk into a dead and flat state of soul. This put a fresh edge on my sword, and I dare say I cut pretty sharply at a lifeless profession. . . . Some fell under it, others fought against it, and some did not know what to make of it, partly because it was a sound to which they were unaccustomed, and partly because they misunderstood my meaning and drift. Amongst these latter at that time was Carby Tuckwell. He treated me with the greatest kindness and respect ; but as I sometimes spoke pretty freely of the state of things at Allington, declaring from the pulpit that I believed the deacons were in some measure to blame for it, he was induced to think that I set myself almost personally against him, that I suspected his religion, and tried to uproot it, as not being genuine. This was not the case, but still such was the impression on his mind. He, however, cordially joined in inviting me to come again ; and as my ministry became better understood and more fully received by the people, I continued with them not only all the winter, but remained with them until the autumn of 1836, though I always declined their repeated wish to be settled over them.

"During my second visit to Allington I preached from John xvii. 3 : 'And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent' ; and after pointing out what it was to know the only true God, by some discovery of His Being, Majesty and Greatness to the soul, I went on to show what it was to know Jesus Christ in the light and by the power of His blessed manifestations. This sermon fell with great weight and power on Carby Tuckwell's mind and showed him that my ministry was not directed, as he thought, against himself or against real religion, but was a cutting down of what was merely natural and notional in order to trace out and bring out more clearly the real work of God upon the soul . . . . This gave him, therefore, a union with me and my ministry from that time forward. Scores, I might say hundreds, of miles have we travelled together in those days when I used to preach at the various little chapels round Allington, as he was always my companion in the vehicle which took me out and brought me back, often quite at a late hour of the night. Nor have I ever had a kinder, more attentive, or affectionate companion and friend."*

To complete the picture, I will include a touching little vignette which he has left of another old hearer, who was at first terribly depressed by his preaching, but who, nevertheless, would always walk his six miles there to hear him.

"Everyone called him Farmer Wild, and he was a plain, simple English farmer of the old school, honest, straightforward, sober and very industrious. He with his wife had long been chapel-people, but had for some time been sunk into a cold, lethargic and sleepy state of soul. When, therefore, the good farmer was first brought under a more searching, separating ministry than he had been accustomed to, it was very cutting to his feelings, and seemed at times to strip him of all his religion. But, as Mr. Huntington somewhere says, 'Where we get our cutting, there we get our healing,' and thus, as every now and then there was a little balm dropped upon the sore, it nailed his ears fast to the door-post; and I may say almost literally as well as spiritually so, for he always sat close to the door of the chapel, in one and the same place, and I seem to see him now in my mind's eye, for he was naturally one of the finest grown men that I have ever seen, hanging upon the word, as though he could eat it. When the service was over, he would creep away by himself and get under a hedge, or sit on a bank (for hedges are rare things in that part of Wilts), where he ate his dinner alone, rarely speaking to anyone and carrying as he best could his own burden, or feasting on any little morsel that he might have gathered up under the word."†

Farmer Wild, I may add, lived only a couple of years to taste the bitter-sweet of the new ministry. The end came in July, 1837, when my father happened to be at Allington. From his diary for that year, the only one which has been preserved, I find that he almost daily rode or drove the six miles to the Wilds' farm to read and pray with his doomed hearer.

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* *Gospel Standard*, April, 1868, Vol. XXXIV., p. 121.

† Ibid. April, 1869, Vol. XXXV., p. 130.

He finally died on Monday, July 24th, and my father promised to come back at great inconvenience in order to bury him in Allington graveyard. He was due to preach at Alvescot, forty miles away in Oxfordshire, on Wednesday 26th. Then, after a brief visit to William Tiptaft at Abingdon, on Sunday 30th he was to open and preach twice in the chapel which his old hearers had built at Stadhampton, after which he had to fulfil engagements in London. Nevertheless, borrowing Joseph Parry's gig he drove the forty miles over the downs on the 25th, and after preaching at Alvescot drove back to Allington on the 27th, arriving barely in time for Farmer Wild's funeral at 7 p.m. The next day, starting at 8 a.m., Mr. Tuckwell drove him back into Oxfordshire. All this points to a marvellous improvement in health and strength.

For many years Farmer Wild's widow and only daughter remained my father's devoted friends and hearers, and they all now lie side by side in the little graveyard. Here, to complete the picture, is a brief extract from the daughter's diary :

" May 11, 1862. In the afternoon of this day mother said to me, 'I was thinking in the morning, whilst you were at chapel at Allington, of your father, how terribly sunk and low-spirited he sometimes came home from there twenty-six years ago, when he first began to hear Mr. Philpot. It came so fresh to my mind. Once in particular. The text was : " A sower went out to sow," &c. Your father seemed so cut off that he could scarce eat his dinner. He told me the singers were the same, so that they could hardly sing. But you might as well have tried to stop a watercourse, as try to stop him from going.' "*

Although, as will have been seen, my father attached supreme importance to a knowledge of Christ " in the light and by the power of His blessed manifestations," he was himself, unlike William Tiptaft, extremely reticent in recording his own experience, and the following is the only explicit account I have been able to trace, though it carries us beyond the years covered by the present volume. One morning in November, 1844, after he had been confined to bed for three weeks, he was thus blessed. " I saw nothing," he writes, " by the bodily eye, but it was as if I could see the blessed Lord by the eye of faith just over the foot of my bed ; and I saw in the vision of faith three things, 1, His eternal Godhead ; 2, His pure and holy Manhood, and 3, His glorious Person of God-Man. What I felt at the sight I leave those to judge who have ever had a view by faith of the Lord of life and glory, and they will know best what holy desires and tender love flowed forth, and how I begged of Him to come and take full possession of my heart. It did not last very long, but it left a blessed influence upon my soul; and if ever I felt that sweet spirituality of mind which is life and peace, it was as the fruit of that view by faith of the glorious Person of Christ, and as the effect of that manifestation. Happy are they who can say by a sweet revelation of Him to their soul, 'And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true; and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son, Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life' (1 John v. 20)"*

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* Ibid.

VI. CONCLUSION.

In conclusion, I would add that I am not altogether sorry that we are unable in the present volume to find space for more than a tenth of my father's three hundred published letters. The remainder we shall hope to include in a second volume, together with a brief account of the marvellous rise of the *Gospel Standard* from its first humble beginnings in 1835 into a magazine of wide circulation and good repute, a rich mine of authentic spiritual experience, which no serious student of religious psychology and the work of grace in the heart can afford to overlook. Such a prophetic faith had my father in its mission, that even as early as January, 1840, when its continuance was by no means assured, we find him writing in the Editors' *Annual Address*, "We are publishing for the future generation as well as the present; and when the hand that has penned these lines shall be mouldered in the grave, and the eyes that read them shall have dropped from their sockets, the dusty volumes of the *Gospel Standard* may still survive to instruct and comfort our children's children." How just was this prevision there are ninety-five volumes to show, and those in my possession at least I can claim to be far from dusty.

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* *The Eternal Sonship of the Lord Jesus Christ.* Preface p. 11. London, Farncombe, 1926.

But the thirty letters here published seem to me to outweigh all the rest in importance, and to demand, as they deserve, particular attention. For they cover the most formative period in my father's spiritual life, the years, too, during which in his peaceful study at Allington he was committing prayerfully to paper his own intimate experiences, and the truths which he believed had been " impressed upon his conscience very powerfully and very distinctly by the finger of God." His two best-known sermons, *Winter afore Harvest*, and *The Heir of Heaven*, which have had and still enjoy a world-wide circulation, date from this period.

Incidentally, and on a lower plane, there is to be read between the lines of the last few letters to Joseph Parry a moving little intimate drama, which lends them a personal interest. Owing to his invalid childhood, his studious youth, and, later on, his deep absorption in the things of the Spirit, my father had become extremely dependent on the help and service of others. Few men, I venture to say, were ever less fitted to live alone. Fortunately, there were always kind friends at hand, who were willing and eager to serve, and, if I may say so, to " spoil " him. In these later letters, if carefully read, you will find hints of two households, each competing for the privilege of aiding him, in gratitude for the spiritual sustenance which he could be the means, under Providence, of conveying to them. One might almost go to the length of personifying these two rival habitations. On the one hand, the remote Wiltshire farmhouse, with its uninterrupted leisure and the intimate companionship of his dear disciple, Joseph Parry, than whom no man came ever nearer to his heart. On the other hand, the old house in Oakham market-place, which I have been at such pains to describe, with its busy coming and going, its anxious, overdriven, but deeply religious parents, and its bevy of handsome, high-spirited young daughters, ranging in age from eighteen to eight, the eldest of whom is a tall, willowy girl, with a lovely complexion, soft nut-brown hair, and eyes as blue as the sky, not long home from a Stamford boarding-school, but already her mother's right hand. There is no mention of her in the letters, but she is there, I might say providentially there, her blonde placidity and even temper the very foil and makeweight to my father's more highly-strung and sombre temperament. And, precisely at this juncture, when he has almost decided to give up all thought of her, his elder invalid brother dies, and he comes into just enough to keep the wolf from even a married door. With her in the scale, the competition between the rival houses cannot but end in a compromise. Joseph Parry has to resign his long-cherished hope of having my father for a permanent pastor, and must rest content with his companionship for one month of refreshment in every twelve; while for the next quarter of a century, the old house at Oakham will receive the new son-in-law as an honoured guest, in his ministerial capacity, during four days in every fortnight. For himself my father gains a loving stay and helpmeet, a thrifty housewife, an unwearied amanuensis, a devoted nurse in his repeated illnesses, and for his four children a mother beyond price or praise.

Well had he written, "I do not fear but that the Lord will take care of me."

LETTERS OF WILLIAM TIPTAFT.

LETTERS OF WILLIAM TIPTAFT

TO WILLIAM TOMBLIN KEAL, M.D., HIS BROTHER-IN-LAW,
AND DEBORAH WARD KEAL, HIS SISTER.

I

"I stand before you this evening as the servant of Christ, or the servant of the devil."

Sutton Courtney, Jan. 30th, 1830.

Dear Brother,—Since I last wrote, I have preached in Abingdon Great Church, on Christmas evening, the only night in the year that it is lighted. I preached the truth, I trust, to a very crowded congregation, supposed to be (sitting and standing, who were able to get in) about 5,000 people. I pleased the believers, but very much displeased the carnally-minded, who were never so puzzled and confounded in their lives before. But even those who hate me and the truth acknowledge that the Bible has never before been so much read in Abingdon, or the Articles of our Church so much examined. I spoke the truth faithfully, and so as all could hear ; but I had no idea that the gospel would have given so much offence. They have done nothing else since but talk about it. I allow there was much strong doctrinal matter in it, but I said no more than I fully believe.

On the Sunday after, a clergyman preached very much against me and the doctrines which I profess. Last week he published his sermon. He misrepresents my sermon so very much that, in my own defence, I am obliged to publish it, for which there is already a great demand. It is a very long sermon, from Matt. i. 21. The clergyman who preached against me is a wine-bibber, a great card-player, and a fox-hunter. They all acknowledge if I am not right, they are sure he is not.

The Lord is with me, for I really believe many are brought out of darkness through my preaching, and their lives manifest their faith as that which works by love and purifies the heart.

It is the truth that offends and disturbs Satan's kingdom. The neighbouring clergymen, who are in the dark, say of me, " Away with such a fellow from the earth ; it is not fit that he should live." Many hate, but some love me, and bless the day they first heard me. Some of the worst characters here have become decided Christians. They bring no charge against me except my views of religion ; but they cannot gainsay them. Some say the Articles of our Church were buried till I brought them forth. My mind is not moved by the persecution, for I have every testimony that I am a minister of Christ, and I believe if He has a work for me to do, I shall do it, in spite of the devil and all his children. It is not coming near to the truth, it is not the letter of the gospel, that will convert men, but the Spirit.

Make the Word of God your study. Pin your faith to no man's views. I scarcely read any other book.

The people of Abingdon come over in large parties to hear what this troubler of Israel hath to say. Though they say all manner of evil against me falsely, they find what I say " quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword." Nature is not changed, the gospel is not changed, and Christ is not changed. What reason is there why they should not hate the truth now as much as in the time of the apostles ? I never saw any fruits of my labours till I roused and disturbed the roaring lion. When, through the grace of God, I began to disturb his kingdom, I soon found that his children began to hiss ; they want to know what has become of their forefathers. I came not here to judge them, but to preach the gospel. Beware of those who want to exalt man in any manner. The world and Satan hate believers. Read Paul's Epistles ; they beautifully throw light upon the other Scriptures. Listen to no one who wants to mix free will and free grace, the law and the gospel ; for free will is a very stronghold of Satan's. Listen to no one who talks about universal redemption. Remember Satan can transform himself into an angel of light, and his ministers into ministers of righteousness. The Pharisees hate me the most. I cut off all their rotten props, and all their fleshly devotion.

Yours very affectionately,

William Tiptaft.

II

"The whole work of salvation is Christ's, and Christ's alone."

Sutton, March 16, 1830.

My dear Brother,—I am happy to say that the sermon has been blessed by God in this neighbourhood, and consequently has made a very great stir. I received a letter from a poor man at some distance, thanking me for printing the sermon, as it has been a comfort to his soul and to others. Of course I shall have neither the praise of the unbelievers, nor their good wishes. The gospel is a fan that will separate the chaff from the wheat. The Pharisees and philosophers get but little hope from me, and will, therefore, seek more flattering preaching elsewhere. I am thankful to say the Lord enables me to be faithful; but it will avail nothing to assent to this or that doctrine, unless the Lord write it on the heart. What is received in the flesh is all nothing, for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, nor can he know them; consequently a man must be born again of the Spirit to understand them. By nature there is no difference amongst us; we are all sprung from Adam, and Christ saith, "A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit." The Scriptures make no distinction in us; we are all vile sinners. "What then? are we better than they? no, in nowise."

The more you know of the truth in a spiritual way, the humbler you will be. To know the mysteries of the gospel it is necessary that you be taught of the Spirit, so as to divide the law and the gospel, and the flesh and the Spirit. Then you will understand the two covenants. Read your Bible frequently. The whole work of salvation is Christ's, and Christ's alone. It is to Him we owe all blessing, in Him all fulness dwells, and we are complete in Him. If you can understand and realise that, happy are you. Faith will not profit you without love to Christ and His people. He will then be precious to your soul, and you will rejoice in Him. You will see when the true light shines into your heart, that you are vile and sinful. You will say with the Bride, "I am black, because the sun has looked upon me." We must be taught of God, that we are not even able to think a good thought. We shall then give all the glory to God, and shall not then think that we can choose between good and evil. A child must be born before it receives milk, and so must man be born again before he can receive the sincere milk of the word.

Praying that grace, peace, and love may be multiplied,

I am yours most affectionately,

WILLIAM TIPTAFT.

III

"The Bible to most is a sealed book."

Sutton, April 30, 1830.

My dear Brother,—My sermon seems to be received among you much in the same manner as I expected. Nature is the same in Rutland as in Berks. I rejoice to say that the doctrines which I preach receive the very testimony which the gospel always did, and always will. You will find that scarcely three respectable persons will speak well of it, and very few of the poor. But there shall be a remnant to say, "It is the truth." When I read the Scriptures, I daily discover that the little I know of the word of God is as a drop in a bucket compared to the whole. The Bible to most is a sealed book. What Ahab said to Elijah, "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" may be said of me at Sutton. The Lord has been pleased to enable me to speak such things that I have troubled Sutton and the neighbouring villages. Some have learnt that they are wrong; whether I be or not, they are sure they are. The Lord is making me useful, by bringing many to a knowledge of the truth. But I caused none to cry out, "What must I do to be saved?" till I preached election, &c., boldly. My old nature fought against the truths for a long time, but when the Lord teaches, we must learn. Read your Bible; get well acquainted with it.

Yours very affectionately,

WILLIAM TIPTAFT.

IV

"Where the gospel is faithfully preached, there will be the same consequences as in the time of our Saviour and the Apostles."

Sutton, June 9, 1830.

My dear Brother,—I rejoice to say that the Lord still continues to bless the word preached by me. As He is pleased to lead me into deeper mysteries of His blessed gospel, I can more fully show forth the errors of false authors and ministers, which consequently causes me to be more hated and despised by a false professing world. There has been a book published called "The Calm Observer," in answer to my sermon. The *Christian Remembrancer*, of the month of April, No. 136, reviewed it, and has borne a strong testimony in favour of it, by not answering any of its arguments, but by heaping upon me low abuse. But even the enemies of the gospel are sorry it has been so reviewed, as abuse is well known to be generally bestowed when arguments to prove the truths of the gospel erroneous are wanting.

As you have, perhaps, not seen the work, I will give you two or three extracts: "The harangue which Mr. Tiptaft has published, under the title of a sermon, is the veriest trash, and most bombastic nonsense which ever proceeded from the lips of one who hopes to escape Bedlam; nevertheless it has excited a considerable sensation in the University of Oxford," &c. (Page 211.) "We really have no patience to proceed further with such perversions of the Scripture. None but those who are as bad as himself will be easily led to adopt his notions. It is but justice to Mr. Parker, the Oxford bookseller, to state that his name was inserted in the title page without his permission, and that he would never have sanctioned the publication, directly or indirectly, of such profane blasphemy." This will enable you to form a judgment of the review, which does not attempt to refute the doctrines. It is very remarkable that such a fool as they say I am should excite a considerable sensation in the great and learned University of Oxford.

I am called mad; so was Christ. I am called a blasphemer; so was Christ; and Christ saith, "The servant is no greater than his lord," &c. Bulteel has gone to see his friends. I preached for him at Oxford to a very crowded church. Many came to hear what the babbler had to say. There were present to hear me from this place and the neighbourhood not less than 60 or 70 of my regular hearers. Of course they were considered fools for going so far to hear such a fool, whom they can hear three times every week. I preached from Col. ii. 19, *extempore*, without any premeditation. I looked to the Lord, and He gave me words, and I was enabled to utter foolish things to confound the wise. I cut down false religion, and exalted Christ, to the great offence of the pious Pharisees. If the learned gownsmen could not digest what I said (there were many present), I was enabled by the grace of

God to feed "the poor of the flock, who knew that it was the word of the Lord." Flesh and blood are not changed, and where the gospel is faithfully preached there will be the same consequences as in the time of our Saviour and the apostles.

I am to preach for Bulteel next Sunday also. I am more offensive in my preaching than he is; I do not try to smooth it and make it palatable. I speak, as Mr. Hewlett says, "in plain and unvarnished language," and not with enticing words of man's wisdom. I like your last letter better than the former one. My advice to you is to keep close to the Bible. Let no one set up a standard for you; and if you are a child of God you will be taught by the Spirit. Do not cavil and reason with the carnal-minded. What advantage will it be if you persuade them to adopt your sentiments? If they are not born again of the Spirit of God, they will receive the doctrines carnally and not spiritually, which will only make them proud and licentious.

I wish you sat under the sound of the blessed gospel. You will find free-will texts to harass and trouble the minds both of you and your wife. Don't be distressed on that account; difficulties will vanish as the Lord teaches. You cannot expect to reconcile all the Bible at once; the devil and his children will try to confound you. If you be children of God, the grace of God will teach you to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.

Yours affectionately in the bonds of the gospel,

William Tiptaft.

V

"*It is a very small matter to be judged by man's judgment.*"

Sutton, June 9, 1830.

My dear Deborah,—I am rejoiced to think that you are so far humbled as to look to Christ alone for the salvation of your soul. You will find if you possess the Spirit of Christ that you will be despised and contemned by all in whose heart Satan reigns. But what saith the Scripture for your consolation? "Rejoice ye, and leap for joy." "For the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you. On their part He is evil spoken of, but on your part He is glorified." You will doubtless try to justify yourself in holding such offensive doctrines, by appealing to the Bible, Litany, and Articles, but you cannot convince the natural man.

Do not be anxious to justify yourself, for it is a very small matter to be judged by man's judgment; and a time will come when you will be justified before all, when millions must fall down, and you shall be able to stand in the perfect righteousness of Christ. You will find one or two only in the same rank of life holding these doctrines, and also a few despised poor people, who are derided and counted fools. My congregation is made up of several parishes, and some come very long distances occasionally. Of course I come off with a good share of abuse as a fool, a madman, a deceiver. But Paul saith, "As deceivers, and yet true."

It is a great privation to you not hearing the gospel, but the Lord will take care of His sheep and feed them. You had much better read the Bible than any other book; you can expect God's blessing in reading it when it cannot be expected with any other. You will find some to consent with you, and then afterwards fly back to free-will and the power of man to begin the work. Grace has nothing to do with the flesh in carrying on the work. We are born again of the Holy Ghost, and consequently have a new principle within us, which is wrought upon by the word of God. "As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby," &c. This new principle is of Christ, and will mortify the old man and reign in us; consequently we are led by the Spirit of God, and He bears witness with our spirit that we are His children, for by it we cry, Abba, Father. The old man is never made better, the new man cannot sin. He cannot sin because he is "born of God"; that is, the new man; the old man is not born of God. It is the opposition of the two principles which causes the warfare. When you are brought to see the two distinct natures, it will afford you a clearer view of the spiritual life. "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless, I live," &c. You will meet with much opposition, but if you lose everything, you will count it gain for Christ's sake.

Yours very affectionately,

William Tiptaft.

VI

"Christ lived and died for us. All He did was for us, and all we do ought to be for Him."

Sutton, July 12, 1830.

My dear Sister,—I am truly rejoiced that the Lord has given you an inquiring mind. You will not be distressed when I say that I have discovered that your views of salvation by free grace are by no means clear, as your letter plainly evinces; for in speaking of some of your relations you say, "I wish they would fix their minds above this world." This expression shows that you do not believe "there is no health in us." We could as soon make a new world as begin a spiritual work in our souls. It is this doctrine that lays man so low in the dust.

You have expressed a great wish to see me, and that others anticipate my arrival in Oakham. I can assure you that you will not very much like to hear the truths the Lord has taught me. I have given you nothing but milk, either by letters or by the sermon as yet, which is plainly seen by the little dislike with which my sermon has been received by you. I have things to say, "hard to be uttered," because you are "dull of hearing." The greatest offence is given when you pull down the strongholds of Satan, when you expose false religion; but remember that no one is to be heard any further than the Scriptures bear him out. I have given great offence in speaking upon prayer as wholly a spiritual work: for God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. It troubles exceedingly the Pharisees; they are very unwilling to cast away their false idols. But it matters not to me whom I offend. Is it scriptural? Whatever is scriptural I hope God will enable me to speak boldly and faithfully.

It seems very cutting to parents when I warn them against making children Pharisees and hypocrites; but the truth is cutting to flesh and blood, for it is sharper than any two-edged sword. When I talk of the holiness of Satan as an angel of light, and his ministers as ministers of righteousness, they look upon me as they did upon my great Master, with hatred and contempt, and cry out, like the very pious in His day of humiliation, "He hath a devil and is mad; why hear ye him?" But the servant is not greater than his master, and if they call the Master of the house Beelzebub, what will they say of His household? We must be looked upon as deceivers, and strong opposers of what the professing world calls true religion; "as deceivers and yet true."

I begin to meet with much hatred and contempt, but my good Master met with much more. The more they revile me falsely, the stronger testimony I have that I am doing the work of the Lord. Who am I that I should disturb a neighbourhood? It is not I. What do they care what opinions *I* hold? It is the work of God that troubles them ; it condemns them, as the Lord enables me to take it out of the letter and set it forth in the Spirit. So I become a troubler of Israel. Nevertheless, my church is crowded in spite of all their hatred, lies, and contempt. Some who show the greatest hatred to the children of God and the truths I declare cannot help coming. The Lord, I rejoice to say, speaks by me. I believe that many are brought to the light through my ministry, and others are comforted and built up, being brought out of bondage.

I am very glad to find you have sufficient light to discover the darkness of the neighbourhood. Very few preach the gospel, and a blind guide ought not to be followed, for we know what the consequence will be. I cannot in this letter enter upon any mysteries of the gospel. But I recommend you to read your Bible alone. Observe, that all the Epistles are addressed to saints. Observe, that none are exhorted to do good works but those who are heirs of salvation. The dead have no ears ; but when the gospel is preached, ears are given by the Spirit to vessels of mercy lying buried in the ruins of the fall, that they may hear the sound and be taught of God. It is an offensive truth, that none are exhorted to good works but those who have the promises. I will give you two or three scriptural proofs : 1 Cor. xv. 57, 58 ; 2 Cor. vii. 1 ; Col. iii. 1-5, 12 ; Titus iii. 8.

Christ hath no concord with Belial. There are two principles in a believer ; one can do nothing but sin, the other cannot sin, because it is born of God. (Sol. Song vi. 13.) This causes a warfare between these two spirits, the good and the bad ; but the good reigns, which enables us to mortify and keep under the flesh, and causes us by the word to bring forth fruit acceptable unto God ; for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. In a few words, this is the gospel ; Christ lived and died for us ; all He did was for us, and all we do ought to be for Him. Our warfare is accomplished and our iniquity is pardoned. This is the gospel, this is glad tidings. The world says we are against good works, but in fact we are the only people that advocate good works, acceptable to God through Christ Jesus. Take not me nor any other man for your guide ; read your Bible, and call no man Rabbi, for one is your Master, even Christ.

Yours affectionately in the bonds of the everlasting gospel,

William Tiptaft.

VII

"If what I preach is not foolishness to the natural man, know assuredly that I preach not the gospel."

Sutton, September 3, 1830.

My dear Brother,—I intend (D.V.) to be at Oakham on the 14th or 15th, but I hope to be with you on the 14th by the Leicester coach, as I intend to return that way the following week, for I cannot conveniently be absent from so large a parish any longer. But you will be quite willing to part from a troubler of Israel in a few days. I shall give the greatest offence, I have no doubt, in speaking against much of the religion of the present day, which is nothing but the work of Satan, but is very near and dear to the flesh, and you will feel very loath to give it up—as unwilling as the Jews were to leave theirs for Christ. "Behold, I, Paul, say unto you that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing."

I had no idea that the gospel of Jesus Christ would give so much offence, but the Scriptures plainly declare it must be so; the wicked must bear their testimony to the truth. "The preaching of the Cross is to them that perish foolishness." If what I preach is not foolishness to the natural man, know assuredly that I preach not the gospel. I trust that you can find several to bear testimony to my Christmas sermon, by saying that it contains contradictions and is foolishness. With respect to you and your wife, I have a good hope that the work is begun. You both know but little; but, "how can you hear without a preacher?" You seem to differ from others, and begin to be looked upon with a jealous eye by old acquaintance, as holding certain strange doctrines. All this promises well. You are, I trust, now considered very strange and peculiar people, and I hope that you differ not only in doctrine, but also in life and conversation. Remember this, "through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom of heaven." Satan will frequently magnify the difficulties which you must encounter as children of God.

Christ makes a variance wherever He is preached; and the Pharisees of our day, who have the most natural religion, will be in craftiness your greatest enemies. They will trouble you with various questions, and endeavour to shake your confidence; but "nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His." Listen not to what any one says unless he bring the testimony of the word. Do not let their piety and great zeal for righteousness have any effect without the word of God. If you receive it, it is after all but the word of man, for you cannot say, "It is written."

At the end of your last letter, you beg to know "whether you are not to be stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord?" Certainly; the word of God expressly declares so. But remember, your zeal must be in the strength of the Lord. I can speak more fully on the subject than I can write; but remember, "our ways are not the Lord's ways." The Pharisees had more zeal than the missionaries in our days, for they would compass sea and land to make one proselyte. I tell you candidly that you will be ready to say, "Thou bringest certain strange things to our ears." Remember, when you are bold for the religion of Jesus Christ, you will not be considered a pious and good man, but a very bad man, nay, very wicked, a blasphemer, and a deceiver. They called the Master of the household Beelzebub; what, then, will they say of His servants? Are you His servant? This is hard to flesh and blood; but it is nevertheless true. The Lord is still pleased to make me a troubler of Israel at Sutton. As truth is preached, so error is made visible.

I must now conclude, with my best love to your wife and children, and all that love the Lord Jesus in sincerity.

Yours very affectionately,

William Tiptaft.

VIII

"Christ can no more do without you, than you can without Christ."

Sutton, October 28th, 1830.

My dear Brother,—I arrived safely at Sutton on the Saturday afternoon. I saw Mr. de Merveilleux, and had a little conversation with him. I believe him to be a lover of gospel truth, and I hope that you will call upon him when you go to Stamford. I met a few friends at his house, and spoke a few words to them. They seemed very desirous to hear, and, I trust, are spiritually hungering after the bread of life. My friend Philpot is ill, and not able to preach. He is coming to see me next week. He is a dear child of God.

I shall be glad to hear in your next letter what advances you are making in religion. I hope that you read your Bible much, and talk with those that fear the Lord. You will find much opposition, both within and without, against a spiritual work; but if it is the Lord's work, it will surely be carried on. You will be surprised to find so much enmity against the gospel; but the word of God shows clearly it must be so. The learned and great find the doctrines of grace great foolishness, and they are constrained to bear a testimony to the truth by saying so. If I found many, of any description, speaking in favour of the doctrines I maintain, it would excite a doubt in my mind whether they were true. You will be perplexed with many favourite texts of the Arminians; but the Lord in due time will make them plain to you and consistent with the doctrines of grace.

Do not be disturbed because you have not much knowledge of divine things. Knowledge profiteth not unless it is given by God the Holy Ghost. "The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." All knowledge avails but little, if there be not a knowledge of Christ Jesus. It is not receiving the gospel in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance which saves. You will find that the grace of God which brings salvation will teach you to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world. You will appear to yourself and others a new creature. Many have a single eye, but it is not to God, but to money. But as a child of God you will be constrained by the love of Christ, to give up everything for His sake, who died that you might live.

Do not imagine that a mere knowledge of the plan of salvation is salvation. If rightly taught, you will be led to rejoice in Christ as the pearl of great price, to love the brethren, and to do many things which the world hates and condemns. As a child of God, you are not of the world, but are chosen out of it. You are only a stranger and a pilgrim here. You are looking to the glorious moment when you are to be delivered from the bondage of corruption; for to die, and be with Christ, is far better than to live in this vain world. Remember that all that you suffer and lose in the cause of Christ, you are to consider gain. Rejoice to think that you are counted not only worthy to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake. Light hath no communion with darkness, and the believer hath no part with the infidel. Having an interest in Christ, and knowing it, you are rich indeed ; you are a son of God ; you have a glorious mansion prepared for you ; and you are sure to have it, for Christ can no more do without you, than you can without Christ. Your security is in Him. "Your life is hid with Christ in God." Because He lives, you shall live also.

In one sense, you are saved by good works, because Christ's good works are your good works, because you are one with Him. It is this glorious union between Christ and His church which gives such consolation and joy to the members of His body. "As Christ is, so are we in this world." "For we are made to sit together in heavenly places" with Christ Jesus, and are "blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Him." May we go on in the narrow way rejoicing in our great Captain, who will see us safely landed on the heavenly shore. "He is faithful that has promised," and He will never leave the work of His own hands. Blessed be His name for ever !

There is but little salt anywhere, and it is much scattered. You will find it difficult to give up your own religion. May the God of peace and love be with all His dear sheep in Oakham, &c.; and that you may abound in faith and love, is the sincere prayer of

Your affectionate Brother,

WILLIAM TIPTAFT.

IX

"*The true Christian has a single eye. Have you one?*"

Sutton, December, 1830.

My dear Brother,—I was pleased with your remarks upon religion in your last letter. As the Lord has been pleased to reveal to you a little of the light of the glorious gospel, a corresponding practice will necessarily follow, for a lively faith is known, as a good tree is known, by its fruit. It is an inestimable blessing to be taught the value of God's word, so as to prize it, and to give much time to reading and meditating upon it. Let no one deceive you with vain words, and cause you to think, because you understand the plan of salvation, that you are sure of eternal glory. To receive the gospel in word is one thing, but to receive it with power, and the Holy Ghost, and much assurance is another. I hope and trust that you have received it that way.

If you have, my dear brother, be assured that a great change will be visible in your life and conversation ; for "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature : old things are passed away ; behold, all things are become new." "The grace of God that bringeth salvation teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world."

You will meet with many professing to love the true doctrines of the gospel ; but, alas ! they at the same time love their sins, and too evidently show themselves to be boasters, proud, covetous, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. Remember, Satan has millions of devices, of which a young convert knows but little, and he is as well pleased to lead his people captive with a knowledge of the word as in any other way. Satan fears nothing but the power and spirit of the gospel, which changes God's dear people from glory to glory, and conforms them to the image of His dear Son. You must not infer from what I have said that I am against the blessed doctrines of grace ; I only would have you not prize that knowledge that puffeth up. The true knowledge of the gospel is a great blessing, and may you abound in it more and more, so that you may prove things that are excellent. There is no other knowledge worth having compared with it ; and I pray that the Lord may by His Spirit lead you to count all things but dung for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord.

All knowledge without the knowledge of Jesus will avail nothing. You are a poor dark, miserable, bewildered, deluded creature, if you know not Christ Jesus. It is the Spirit's work to take of the things of Jesus and to show them to the Church. It is only the Spirit's teaching that will afford lasting comfort and consolation ; and when we are truly taught, we learn to be humble, meek, and lowly of heart ; we see our helpless and lost state by nature, and are surprised to find our hearts so unclean and sinful. We are taught to see that Jesus is "the Way, the Truth, and the Life," and that there is no hope of entering into glory but through Him. Seeing yourself lost and helpless will lead you to pray to God frequently and fervently to keep you from falling. You will feel troubled and distressed at your cold and lukewarm state, and be grieved that covetousness, pride, and divers lusts are waging such strong war against your soul. But forget not that we are soldiers, and have a continual warfare. Read an account of the Christian armour in Eph. vi., and you may be sure all that would not be supplied for the Christian unless he fully stood in need of it. After an account of the armour, the apostle exhorts strongly to watchfulness, prayer, and perseverance. Blessed be God that we need not be alarmed as to the great warfare, for we have a sure promise that we shall be conquerors, yea, even " more than conquerors through Him that loved us." God hath given us His dear Son, and will He not with Him also freely give us all things ? I pray the Lord to lead you to rest more entirely upon Jesus Christ, and that you may see Him to be your wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. I hope that your faith will work by love and purify your heart, so that you may daily become more dead to this world, more fervent and frequent in prayer, and more earnest in pressing towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

The true Christian has a single eye. Have you one ? The Lord's work will be continued, if begun. I hope, when you write again, you will be enabled to tell me more of the Lord's mighty power working in your soul, and causing you to abound in fruit, to the praise and glory of His holy name.

I am going on here much as usual ; my congregation continues still very large, and many profess to know the truth, but the chaff is mixed with the wheat. Some have a clear knowledge of the doctrines, but are evidently void of grace, which has led me to use the exhortations more earnestly. We find doctrines first in the Epistles, and then exhortations. Christ saith, " Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bring forth much fruit."

I have had a clerical friend visiting with me, with whom I can see eye to eye. His name is Philpot, a Fellow of Worcester College, Oxford, and he has a curacy in the neighbourhood. He is rather delicate in health, and cannot just now serve his church. He has been with me more than a month. He is a very valuable friend, and I trust the Lord will make his visit very profitable to me. He took a First Class in classics at Oxford in 1824. His company makes the dreary evenings pass away very pleasantly.

Give my best love to Deborah, and tell her I should be very pleased to have a letter from her.

Believe me, my dear Brother,

Yours in Christ,

W. Tiptaft.

X

"Your kingdom is not of this world."

Sutton, Jan. 8, 1831.

My dear Brother,—I am very anxious to hear how the work of grace is going on in your hearts, whether you prove all things and hold fast that which is good. The way to heaven is strait and narrow, and Satan is an unwearied adversary, in disputing every inch of the way. You will be much despised and cast out for Christ's sake, and nothing will offend more than separating yourselves as much as possible from carnal people. It is the life which condemns the professing world. When the world sees you unmoved by the riches and the pleasures which it so much adores; when you are led by the Spirit "to count all things but dung for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord"; when you prove the light which you have to be from above, by giving you a single eye to God's glory, you must expect then to bear reproaches from the Hagar race.

I hope and trust you study much the word of God. When you read that, you know that you are on safe ground, and you can say to Satan and his allies, "It is written." There is but very little true religion anywhere. Our hearts are hardened through the deceitfulness of sin, and the Scripture, which cannot be broken, tells us that the righteous scarcely are saved. It is a very narrow way to heaven, and if we enter in, it will be entirely by the grace of God. You will be led to see how vain the doctrines of the Arminians are. It is very plain that the world is too much in the hearts of Christians, and Satan covers over covetousness under the name of prudence. How Christians compare themselves one with another, instead of with the word of God; but God has a people, whom He will separate from the world. He will show them, by His blessed Spirit, what He has done for them through our Lord Jesus Christ, as Paul says, "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." Happy and blessed are they who have not the spirit of the world ruling in their hearts, but the Spirit of God, so that they may understand the things which are freely given to them, such as justification through the blood of Christ, pardon of our every sin, promises of help, support, and strength to overcome the world, the flesh and the devil, and a certainty of our being more than conquerors through him who died that we might live, who was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

I am very anxious to hear from you, and to know whether the word comes to you with power. and with the Holy Ghost, and with much assurance. It must be a great source of joy and delight that you and your wife think alike, that you are both agreed that salvation is of grace, and grace alone, that you can provoke one another unto love and good works, and cheer one another under the temptations of Satan and the persecution of a wicked world. You must be partakers of the sufferings of your great Master, so shall you also of His consolations, and He will never leave you nor forsake you.

I have spent this winter very pleasantly, being blessed with such a valuable friend as Philpot for my companion. He is a very highly gifted man, but he desires to present his body a living sacrifice unto Christ. He is delicate in health, and is affected with a pain in his chest. He will continue with me during the winter, I hope, for his conversations are very profitable to me, and we see eye to eye in almost every point ; so there is no jarring and arguments.

I have had as yet this winter my church very crowded. Some leave, and fresh ones come ; some say I am a good man, and others say I deceive the people. I am not heaping up treasures upon earth for moth and rust to corrupt. I feel thankful to the Lord I am so provided with every comfort in this world. I hope that He will teach me self-denial, that I may more liberally assist others that want even the necessaries of life—poor and afflicted brethren in Christ. It is more blessed to give than to receive. It is a hard saying, " Sell all that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasures in heaven." When great grace was upon the primitive Christians, they had all things common. As a Christian, your mind will be much more easy the less you have to do with the world. Having food and raiment, be therewith content. Riches and cares choke the seed, and keep you from communion with God through Christ. They that will be rich fall into many snares, &c. (1 Tim. vi. 9.) Your kingdom is not of this world.

Believe me, yours affectionately,

W. Tiptaft.

XI

"*It matters little what a man knows, if Christ be not to him the pearl of great price.*"

Sutton, March 14th, 1831.

My dear Brother,—I feel much obliged to you for your last letter, and am rejoiced to find that you are desirous of knowing more of Christ. You have much to contend with in various ways from the world, the flesh, and the devil. Satan is a very subtle enemy, and never spreads his snare in your sight. I hope you will not be induced to value any knowledge which does not cause you to love Christ more, and to live more decidedly as a member of His kingdom. Satan does not care how much knowledge you have in your head, so long as he can keep possession of the citadel of your heart. Consequently, he will change his position a thousand times, before he will surrender his hold. But God's grace must and will dethrone him, and set up the kingdom of Christ in your heart, so that you will serve a new Master, and for very different wages. All that Satan can boast of, or tempt us with, are perishable things of time, that will soon vanish away. But though we profess to despise the riches and honours of this life, none but those who have the light of God's countenance shining upon them will view them in their proper light. Satan is the god of this world, and he blinds the minds of them which believe not. If one device will not succeed, he will try another ; and every unregenerate man will be led captive by him, in some way or other. Many may think they have outwitted him by a knowledge of great truths in the head, whilst their heart is devoid of grace.

You may, perhaps, think these remarks may not be profitable to you ; but I believe we think and speak a great deal too seldom of the greatest of all enemies, and I feel this is his most subtle device. Old disciples of Christ can say, " We are not ignorant of his devices." But young converts will be entangled, more or less. Consequently, it becomes ministers of Christ to show forth particularly what little they may know of them, so that the word of God " may be a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our paths." Though we are not *of* his kingdom, we live *in* his kingdom ; and we must pass through it to our eternal rest. We must, therefore, watch and pray that we enter not into temptation. You will find " take heed " very frequently in the Bible, and as such words are there we may be sure they are necessary. "Exhort one another while it is called To-day"; "Take heed, lest your heart be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." Now, no Christian will grow in grace who has not a single eye to God's glory; for if the eye be not single, the body is full of darkness.

It matters little what a man knows, if Christ be not to him the pearl of great price. Is Jesus Christ precious to you? Do you love Him so that you would die for Him? Do you count all you lose for His sake gain? Are you willing to make great sacrifices sooner than deny Him? Untried faith is uncertain faith. When you are cast out, and have many trials and difficulties to contend with, you will rejoice, I trust, that you are counted not only worthy to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake.

You will not be persecuted for holding truths in the head, but for having grace in your heart; for the former will not cause you to differ from the world. When the fruits of the Spirit manifest themselves in your life; when you are blind to your own interest in this world; when you are deaf to the advice of the worldly-wise, then it will be said, "Mr. — is a changed man; he is a fool." Now, my dear brother, be assured of this, as God works in your dark soul, such changes as these will be caused; so that instead of panting after the riches of this world, you will pant after the unsearchable riches of Christ. Human nature cannot and will not make great sacrifices; but as you have a knowledge given to you by the Spirit of the exceeding great and precious promises laid up in Christ for God's chosen few, you will be led to see the nothingness and vanity of all things here below, and you will with joy cry out, "We have a kingdom which cannot be moved." God, by His Spirit, quickens, and He alone can enable you to separate from your old companions and the world, and so make great sacrifices for Christ's sake, who hath died that you might live: who became poor that you through His poverty might be made rich. Your conscience will become more tender, and you will be better able to discern between good and evil.

At this present time my conscience is not very easy about the Church Establishment. I neither like the system, nor the forms and ceremonies, particularly the baptismal service and catechism. God forbid that my conscience should be hardened through a strong inclination of the flesh to cleave to its respectability and riches. I am not fully satisfied what I shall do; but

I pray that God may guide me, and that I may not take such an important step hastily and unadvisedly. You will, perhaps, be surprised to hear these objections against an Establishment which is admired so much by the world at large, especially by the rich and great. I was perfectly satisfied with it, till the Lord was pleased to open my eyes to discern its inconsistencies. A letter would not, if entirely on the subject, afford me room to say all I could say.

In the baptismal service we thank God in the surplice for regenerating children, and then put on the black gown, go into the pulpit, and tell them in plain terms that they were not born again. Our Liturgy makes every baptized person a member of the true Church, and we have to address them as such when we know to the contrary by their fruits. And the catechism is so full of errors that I am sure no one with a glimmering of light will teach children it.

Philpot is still with me, and a very sincere Christian he is; he will leave shortly. He thinks about leaving the Church, though he would give up his Fellowship, and would not be worth a groat. Would not the world call him a great fool? You and I have much to learn. We are very carnal and worldly-minded; we have but little grace. What have *we* sacrificed for Christ?

Yours in the bonds of the everlasting gospel.

W. TIPTAFT.

XII

"*Living sheep must have living shepherds.*"

Sutton, May 2nd, 1831.

My dear Brother,—I was very glad to hear by your last letter that your wife was safely delivered of another son; and I hope that he will prove a blessing to you both. God's mercies have been great and manifold towards you in this life, and I pray that they may not prove snares. The children of God almost always flourish more in trials and difficulties than in the sunshine of health and prosperity. The promise is, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be"; consequently, if there be not trials within from Satan's temptations, or afflictions and persecutions from without, we shall not call upon God heartily for help. So when we pray for grace we at the same time ask for trials. In the case when Paul prayed that the messenger of Satan might depart from him, the Lord said to him, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for My strength is made perfect in weakness." "Most gladly, therefore," he adds, "will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." So the Lord answered his prayer, not as Paul asked; but he was content that it should be so, that he might enjoy more of the power of Christ in his own soul.

Your last letter was very short, and you never gave your opinion respecting the important change I contemplate about leaving the Establishment. My mind is perplexed upon the subject, which I believe will end in my leaving. "But he that believeth shall not make haste." I trust that God will direct me. I can assure you that the more I reflect upon the state of our Establishment, the more I am persuaded it becomes me, as a consistent minister of God's word, to leave it. I consider the riches of the national Church are a great cause of her corruptions. Take them away, and then who would belong to her? Would the blind guides work for nothing? Would the spiritually minded go through forms which they must condemn in their own consciences?

Pride and covetousness cleave very close to us, and they influence us more than we imagine. How very different are the ministers of the present day from those in Paul's day! He says, "We are the filth of the earth, and the offscouring of all things"; "Yea, ye yourselves know that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that are with me." Ministers of Christ are now called gentlemen,—Rev., Right Rev., Most Rev. Father in God. They are bowed down to and worshipped. Will God be mocked? Will He not be avenged on such a professing Church? "The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and the people love to have it so. But what will they do in the end thereof?" What says Christ? "He that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger" (Luke xxii. 26). It is plain they differ widely in these respects, but by no means less in their doctrine. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant (slave)." The power of godliness is but little known. What is the Church of England? Of what characters does it consist? Is the system altogether pleasing in God's sight, or is it hateful? I will not say any more on the subject; for perhaps you may think I am prejudiced, and do not state things fairly.

Bulteel and myself intend to go for two months to preach the gospel in the dark parts of the West of England. We shall go the middle of this month (D.V.). We shall preach in churches, chapels, barns, rooms, or in the open air. We shall, if the Lord strengthens us for the work, give great offence. But it is a glorious work to preach the everlasting gospel. It is the very purpose for which I was ordained. Christ will not turn us out of His Church for following His steps in preaching the gospel in every city and village. I should not be surprised if the Bishop withdraw Bulteel's licence, as he is only a curate. My vicarage is a freehold, and I know not what authority the Bishop has over me. He would not turn me out if I went to Melton to hunt and gamble. But preaching the gospel in dark villages is a dire and heinous offence, being *so very contrary* to the word of God. Such a charge, that even the very apostles never heard of, and whoever commits it is worthy of bonds and imprisonment, or even death itself.

I am anxious to hear how you are going on in spiritual things at Oakham. You must remember that everything is opposed to the work of Christ ; but in this respect His power is made more fully manifest. God's grace is visible when we see it affect the hearts of the most determined sinners, and cause them to stand up boldly for His worthy name, which they formerly used to blaspheme. You will find great difficulties to walk and act like a Christian in your profession. Even the very beginnings of a Christian life in such a dark place as Oakham will be hated. If you have but little light, you cannot sit under such dark ministers. You would rather dig for your bread than act so contrary to Christ's express commands : "Take heed what ye hear" ; "Beware of false prophets." You will cause the weak brethren to stumble by inconsistency. If you sit under a blind guide, you confirm him in his ministry, and bolster up his pride. You may profess what you please if you will hold with the world, and sit under the same minister, however dark, with the world. You may boast of your knowledge, for that is all you can boast of ; for living sheep must have living shepherds, and dead people dead shepherds.

You will find the most spiritual of God's people amongst the poor. I observe so much pride and conformity to the world amongst the rich, that I stand in doubt of many who are considered to be spiritual people. James ii. condemns most of them.

They have a fear of God, but it is to be feared it "is taught by the precept of men" (Isaiah xxix. 13). That you may differ widely from such professing Christians amongst those of your rank and condition is the sincere prayer of

Yours in the bonds of the everlasting gospel,

William Tiptaft.

XIII

"*The world in its various shapes is Christ's great enemy.*"

Colinshays, June 11th, 1831.

My dear Brother,—You will not be surprised at the proceedings of Bulteel and myself, as I informed you in my last what our intentions were. We arrived in Somerset on the 16th of May, and have almost every evening since been preaching, one or both of us, in church, chapel, or the open air. We have, almost in every instance, asked for the church, and if refused, preached in the chapel or open air. We have preached in dissenting chapels, in Wells, Glastonbury, Somerton, Langport, Castlecary, Bruton, Wincanton, &c., sometimes in a church and sometimes in a chapel. We last Sunday had four churches, near Hindon, in Wilts. We are now visiting Mr. Dampier, near Bruton. We are to preach each once in both the churches to-morrow, and, between the two services, I am to preach in Wincanton large Independent chapel. Mr. Rogers, of Yarlington, came here yesterday, to offer me his church for Tuesday evening. He is a man of large fortune, and went last evening, with Mr. Dampier and family, to hear Bulteel preach at Bruton, in the Dissenters' chapel; and I preached at Wanstrow, near Frome.

I need not say that our conduct excited surprise. We have many hearers. The places of worship are generally much crowded; people come from far to hear us, and invite us to come and preach to them; so we may truly say, "The harvest is great, but the labourers are few." Many think we have no right to preach in dissenting chapels; but it is not forbidden, either by the canons or the word of God, for the latter is altogether in our favour. I believe the Lord is with us, and makes us instruments in exciting a great inquiry into spiritual things. Mr. Dampier has a wife and nine children, and a large estate; his house and establishment on a superior scale. I expounded to the family this morning. His family, domestics, and friends formed by no means a small congregation. Mr. D. is much reviled and hated; he preaches faithfully, and gives us the right hand of fellowship with cordiality and with great pleasure; assists us in our proceedings, in lending us his carriages, horses, and servants. Of course, the orthodox clergy are very angry with him, and us, and all that lend us their churches, or come to hear us.

We have preached to some thousands in the various places, and not without profit; for I believe the Lord is with us. We bring, I am glad to say, a reproach upon all that receive us, particularly those who open their churches to us after having preached in the chapels in the neighbourhood. Some say we are mad; some, that we are beside ourselves; some cry out, "My Lord Bishop, restrain them," and some wish us God speed; but the generality wonder at our conduct. We are both willing to be turned out of the Establishment for preaching the gospel. One of our Articles says, "Whatever is not read in the Scriptures, nor can be proved thereby, is not required of any man." Many seemed opposed to us at first, who afterwards support us, acknowledging they cannot say a word against us, for the work may be of God.

I now call to mind a remark which Deborah made to me, about three years ago, coming out of Oakham church: "You will soon be like Rowland Hill, and preach here and there." Little did I think then those words would prove true. I hope that God will daily give me a greater desire to glorify Him, so that I may serve Him more truly with a single eye. Mrs. Bulteel and son have joined us this week and we are going, the latter end of next week, to Plymouth. We hope to be there about the 18th. Bulteel's friends live at Plymouth, and there are several in that neighbourhood anxious to see us. Bulteel's name is extremely well known, on account of his sermon; so, whoever opens their pulpit doors is aware of what doctrines we preach.

I cannot enter into particulars about the opposition we met with, and the various effects caused by our preaching. But I can assure you there is no small stir and they are almost ready to say, "These men, that have turned the world upside down, are come hither also." We must remember, Satan is not dead; we may expect that he is laying snares for us in every way. It is easy for him to flatter and puff us up with pride, and make us believe we are doing a great work. He is an old deceiver, and we are young Christians. I hope and pray that God will humble us, and show us more of our nothingness, that we may glory in Christ and in Christ alone. Why we give so much offence is, because so many follow us, and ministers of the Establishment support us and encourage us; and, by going into dark villages, we expose the ignorance of blind guides.

All these circumstances, you may imagine, give much offence to the chief priests and Pharisees. The world is not changed, nor the gospel. As it was in former days, so it is now. I am grieved to say, I meet with very little of the power of godliness. I have great opportunities of seeing the state of religion, and find my journey very profitable in that respect. We meet with professors of all denominations, but a different name does not make a different man. It is only the grace of God in the heart that makes men manifestly new creatures in Christ Jesus. The world, in its various shapes, is Christ's great enemy; and Satan is very busy in blinding the eyes of men, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. "All seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's." I should think that you find it difficult to overcome the world. Worldly wisdom reigns much. We act much like the Gentiles in making provision for the flesh. When the world sees you so taken up with Christ, from the beauty and glory you see in Him, that you become crucified to the world and the world to you, they will hate you the more.

Thank Deborah for her very kind letter: and, I can assure you, I am pleased to hear that —— is persecuted for Christ's sake; I hope to hear of his suffering much more. We have much cause to leap for joy on such occasions, if we be assured it is for righteousness' sake that we suffer. If he be faithful, they will treat him as his great Master. If we were of the world, the world would speak well of us. Tell me, in your next, what you have suffered for Christ. Satan is well pleased with the state of religion in our day, or he would roar a little more loudly.

We are now at Colinshays, near Bruton, where we have engagements till Wednesday; we shall then go to Kingweston, near Glastonbury, till Tuesday, D.V. We hope to reach Plymouth that evening; we may remain there a fortnight, or longer. Give me a full account of spiritual things in your neighbourhood, and give my love to all who love the Lord Christ in sincerity.

Yours affectionately, in the best of bonds,

W. Tiptaft.

XIV

"The Church Clergy consulted together whether they could not put us into the stocks."

Sutton, July 27th, 1831.

My dear Brother,—Through the mercy and goodness of God, I am again quietly settled at Sutton after my two months' tour in the West of England. I arrived on Friday, July 15th, and left Bulteel with his wife and child in Devon, for I could not conscientiously leave my own flock any longer ; for during my absence they were left almost without food, as I could not get a minister of Christ for love or money.

Soon after I wrote to you we left Somerset for Belle Vue, near Plymouth, and began to preach in that neighbourhood. We stopped about ten days in the vicinity of Plymouth. Bulteel preached in the large church at Plymouth, which was also offered to me ; and I should have accepted it, had I remained another Sunday. When Bulteel preached there it was crowded to excess. We preached also in the open air, and in what churches we could obtain, to the great annoyance of the Church clergy. They consulted together whether they could not put us into the stocks. Of course they called upon my Lord Bishop to restrain us. We were the more offensive because multitudes would flock together to hear us.

After we left Plymouth, we travelled along the southern coast of Devon, and preached in several of the principal towns. We both preached. Consequently we kept our hearers standing nearly two hours, and sometimes longer. We preached fifteen nights out of eighteen in the open air, and the numbers that gathered together surprised us ; but the novelty of it, and the size of the towns were much the cause. I will mention a few of the towns : Modbury, Kingsbridge, Dartmouth, Brixham, Torquay, Teignmouth, Totnes, Exmouth, &c., &c. We had generally a table to stand upon. I preached upon the quays, as many of the places were by the sea, or had a large river running by them. We were not much molested, considering the offensive truths we preached, and the numbers of the vilest characters amongst our hearers. But we were called every name that was applied to Christ and the first preachers of the gospel, and we were pelted with a few stones and dirt, &c. But, upon the whole, we had but little to bear for our great and gracious Master. We preached twice at Teignmouth, and twice at Exeter, in the open air. A constable and a magistrate came the second night at Exeter, but we regarded them not, and they dared not touch us, nor could they prevent us, for we had a message for thousands.

Our flesh rebelled much against the work ; but I am sure nothing would excite a neighbourhood more than faithful preachers standing up in that way. But they must preach the finished work of Christ, or little effect in any way will be manifested. We were followed from place to place by several, and they who were taught of God knew the sound. We were much refreshed by conversations with God's dear people, who were chiefly amongst the poor, and they, alas ! poor creatures, were almost without shepherds. Great darkness prevails, and very few preach the fulness of the gospel. That part of Devon in which we were is as dark as Rutland, and almost as void of true ministers. Many of God's dear people showed us great kindness, and those who received us we called Jasons ; for they certainly had to bear a cross. Mr. Synge, of Buckeridge House, near Teignmouth, was very kind to us. He stood by us twice in the open air at Teignmouth. We took up our abode with him, and he sent us in his carriage to Totnes, and met us again at Exeter, and stood by us again. May the Lord reward him ! He is a man of property, and cousin to your curate.

I could not, in one or two letters, say all that you might desire to know about our journey. But the great question is, Who were converted ; and who were comforted ? We heard of convictions which were very striking. If no blossom there will be no fruit, but of course we knew but little of the effect of our preaching, as we started away directly, and went immediately to another place. But many could testify of our preaching that it was good for them to be there. We had a very great number of ministers of all sorts to hear us. Some said we were mad, some said that we were good men, some said that we deceived the people, some mocked, and others said that they should like to hear us again. Very many, both rich and poor, wondered how we dared preach everywhere and anywhere, and they wanted to know what our diocesans will say. I have heard nothing from mine, although I am sure he knows of it. Bulteel is to return for Sunday next. I do not think that he has heard from his bishop. We are both indifferent how our diocesans may act. If they turn us out of the Church of England, we shall see our way clear;

for we both think, that if a mother ever had a daughter, our Established Church is one of Rome's. Bulteel can easily be removed, but they will find difficulty in removing me, as I am an incumbent. I think they will be afraid of interfering with Bulteel, as his name is so well known, and the poor Establishment is tottering to its very basis. As I mentioned before, the canons cannot prove us guilty, and the Scriptures are on our side. My desire is to do the Lord's work, and I shall not stop (D.V.) in bearing a testimony for Jesus, concerning those precious truths I know for my own comfort, whenever I have an opportunity.

O, my dear brother, may God open your eyes. I trust the Lord has begun the work in you and your wife, but it is a day of small things. To have the least spark of grace in our souls is a cause of unutterable thankfulness. It is a mercy beyond expression. Your views are changed ; you like to talk with God's people ; you stand and plead the cause of such ; you believe in the truth. All this is promising ; but remember, it is through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of heaven. There is a daily cross, and you must bear it, or there will be no crown.

Be pleased to let me know whether I can have £20 or £30 soon, as my conscience is not comfortable to have so many hundreds, and poor brethren in Christ wanting bread. I do not like to give money away to support pride and idleness ; nor do I like to keep it in store when Christ's dear friends and people want it. We are told not to lay up treasures upon earth. I can say—the Lord be praised—I care less about money, and could live in a plain way. A little plain food and plain raiment are quite good enough for our vile bodies. We visited an admiral who has not even a silver teaspoon, and he gives all away (nearly) to the poor for Christ's sake. We dined with him, and he showed us the power of Christianity whilst we preached it. What is this vain world ?

Write me a very long letter, and give me a full account of the Lord's work in your neighbourhood.

With every good wish, believe me to be

Yours affectionately, in the best of bonds,

W. TIPTAFT.

XV

"Faith without works is dead."

Sutton, Sept. 5th, 1831.

My dear Brother,—I was delighted with your letter which I received last Saturday, as it gave me good reason to believe the Lord has begun a good work in another of our relatives. Time will make it manifest. I should be sorry to discourage it in the least, "but by their fruits ye shall know them."

Though it is not convenient for me to visit Rutland this autumn, nevertheless, as I am anxious to see you, I intend, God willing, to be with you next month. Bulteel is kind enough to say that he will serve my church; but he will not perform any of the ceremonies; and, as my parish is large, it is rather inconvenient. He slept at my house on Saturday night, and preached in Abingdon market-place on Sunday morning to two or three thousand people, and on Sunday next he will preach in my church, and after the sermon a collection will be made towards building a chapel for him at Oxford. Do not charge me with bigotry. He has bought a piece of ground at Oxford, and hopes to raise subscriptions sufficient to build a chapel. His hearers, of course, are chiefly poor; consequently, the chief part of the money must be raised elsewhere.

Since his dismissal from St. Ebbe's, he has preached once a Lord's day in his own garden to a very large congregation. I have not heard from my diocesan directly or indirectly; so when I come to see you I shall not be particular about Gothic arches, for the people form the church, and not mud and stone. If the Lord is with me I must give offence, for many of the sleepy orthodox cannot cordially bid me God speed in breaking down the walls of bigotry and prejudice.

We have very pleasing accounts of the usefulness of our labours during our travels. Some, I trust, will prove seals to our ministry. They are living testimonies that we were not acting contrary to the will of God, however man might scoff at and condemn us. I go on here much as usual, but not so comfortable in my mind, as my objections against the Church of England grow stronger and stronger, so that if I am not turned out I must resign; I believe it is pride and covetousness that keep me in. My church is still crowded. Some professors fall away, and others rise up; and so in one respect I am discouraged, and in the other encouraged. But things go on here much as they do where there are other preachers of the gospel. As it was in the early days, so it is now. I feel assured that if you and Deborah are faithful, you must bear a heavy cross in such a place as Oakham. He is not a Christian who differs in sentiment only from the world, but in practice. Faith without works is dead. You compare yourselves with others, therefore you are not wise. People in your circumstances will find it next to an impossibility to enter into heaven; and I feel more assured daily that God's people are very scattered in the present day. Many are deceived and deceiving others, but God is not deceived. I shall rejoice to find you in a very spiritual state, for I want rousing and stirring up, for I am very carnal and dead; my heart is too much cleaving to the dust. Make no engagements for me in a worldly way; for I trust, through the grace of God, I shall be more decided than I was when I was with you last time. I hope that Christ will be exalted, and we shall experience more of His Spirit in our hearts. Satan is a wonderful enemy, and is endeavouring to rob us of all comfort, if he cannot keep us under his dominion.

I shall hope to find you all rejoicing in Christ Jesus, fighting bravely in His name; and that the Lord may direct you to act to His glory and praise is the sincere prayer of

Yours most affectionately in Christ,

W. TIPTAFT.

XVI

"*If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. How awful!*"

Sutton, Oct. 25th, 1831.

My dear Brother,—I am very much obliged to you and Deborah for your joint letter; it rejoiced my heart to hear that some found it good to their souls to hear me; and those poor creatures that rebelled against it were also confirming the truth; for though Christ is precious to some, He is a stone of stumbling unto others. It is a very high honour to be an ambassador for Christ, when we can truly say, "As we were allowed to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, who trieth our hearts; neither used we flattering words, as ye know." Faithfulness is much needed in the present day. We are too inclined to prophesy smooth things, and we are constrained to do so in some measure, for we should otherwise too glaringly condemn ourselves. Before a man can preach the spirit of the gospel, his life and conversation must be according to it ; and most gospel preachers fall short in this respect. It is the cross we are inclined to shun ; but we shall bear it, if we be Christ's ministers, and then our walk will be quite contrary to the world.

The professing church is too much like the Gentiles of old, saying, "What shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be clothed ?" Whilst we honour the god of this world in such a manner we need expect little opposition from him, for he cares not about head-notions, as they make little or no encroachments upon his territories. I feel assured that neither you, your wife, nor myself have sacrificed much for the Lord yet, and our evil nature will contend most strongly that there is no need. But I trust that the Holy Spirit has taught us the contrary ; for, if not, I may truly say, "We do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God."

I must now tell you that I am harassed in my mind about leaving the Church of England, for I find that I cannot hold my living and a good conscience too. Every reason which is urged on me to continue savours of the things which be of man, and not of God. I believe it to be an unholy system, from an undergraduate in preparation at Cambridge to the Archbishop of Canterbury. I cannot read the Baptismal and Burial Services ; and I am inclined to think that pride and covetousness have caused me to continue in it to the present moment. What I shall do if I leave it, I know not. God will direct me. I am willing to labour in His service, and I shall rejoice to be free from such shackles as I now labour in. I find that all who recommend me to keep my living have no grace in their hearts, or so little that I can scarcely perceive it. Out of the camp there is reproach ; but, by the grace of God, I have learnt to esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than my living. We know but little of the deceit and wickedness of our own hearts ; and that detestable pride is interwoven with every fibre of them. We must suffer with Christ before we reign with Him ; and if grace enters the heart, the world must be turned out, and then a man will act in a manner which surprises the world. "No man can serve two masters." "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

I consider the genteel Christians of the present day very much like Gentile Christians. When the Lord opens your eyes wider, you will see how much worldly-mindedness there is, in one shape or other, amongst the professors around you ; and when you reprove them for it they are almost ready to turn back and say, " I desire not the knowledge of thy ways." The true knowledge of Christ alone will avail ; they must be taught of God what riches they have in Christ, to make them despise the world and all its wealth and honours.

Bulteel has been to London with Irving and his friends, and has some new views upon the subject of redemption in which I cannot agree. I have been at Oxford with him to-day. He is fully convinced of the gift of tongues, and that the sick can be healed by prayer in faith.

I am convinced that grace with most is only in the bud, and will not grow if a person acts contrary to the word of God. There is a cross to bear ; and if a person does not take it up, what will be the consequence ? The conscience will be hardened, and Satan prevail. When people profess to have received the truth, by their life and conversation they influence others ; and consequently, by doing that which is wrong, they cause the weak to stumble. You will find many who will talk to you upon the Calvinistic points, who know nothing of the vital power of them in their souls. " The kingdom of God is within you "; it is " not in word, but in power." We must know ourselves sinners before we shall value the blood and righteousness of Christ. We must be under the teachings and operations of the Spirit for some time before the heart is fully established with grace, which is a good thing. The more tried and tempted we are, the nearer we shall be brought to God, and see the suitability of Christ in all His glorious characters. Few have the true light in their heart ; so that they can see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ ; but as we receive the power of religion, it will be made manifest in our lives.

It is surprising how Satan helps many to reconcile difficult passages in Scripture with their manner of life. But why are they difficult ? Because our eye is not single. Christ made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant. Let this mind be in you. Ask each of the professors around you what they have suffered for Christ. But remember, the children of God are soldiers, chosen by Christ to endure hardness. Satan is not much opposed in the present day; it seems that we are in the Laodicean state, for many talk about schools, and societies, and evangelical preachers; but let them read Rev. iii. 17. I hope the Lord will give you a spirit of prayer at Oakham, that the true work of the Lord may be revived amongst you. The power of the gospel is sure to be followed by the cross. We are too much liked by the world, and too well spoken of; it would not be so if we lived godly in Christ Jesus. God forbid that we should rest in a form of godliness. I hope God will search and prove us, and empty us from vessel to vessel, so that we may not be at ease in Zion. I hope and trust that the Lord's people will remember me at Oakham in their prayers. I much need them, for I begin to be more harassed; for, as yet, I believe I have been borne upon the sides and dandled upon the knees of Zion. But it is a blessed promise, that my strength shall be according to my day; and again, the Lord says, "My grace is sufficient for thee."

That the Lord may establish your heart with grace, is the sincere prayer of

Yours affectionately in the Lord,

William Tiptaft.

XVII

"Flesh is not favoured in this transaction, but a burdened conscience."

Sutton, Nov. 16th, 1831.

My dear Brother,—I am rather disappointed at not having received a letter in answer to my last. As I have now been led to act in that which I have long talked about, I feel assured you will be glad to hear some of the particulars. My former letter, however, will prevent any surprise at the important step I have taken.

After frequent prayer to God and deep consideration, I sent a long Letter to the bishop of Sarum, declaring my intention of resigning my living last Thursday, and received an answer yesterday, saying he accepted it. You are aware that flesh is not favoured in this transaction, but a burdened conscience. The performance of the ministerial services constrained me to resign my living. I feel assured that only pride and covetousness have caused me to continue in it so long. I shall not enter into any particular reasons for resigning, as I intend to publish them, and then you can consider them at your leisure.

I do not expect to escape difficulties by giving up my living. They may be said now to begin ; but the grace of God is sufficient for me. The great question is, What shall I do ? If I am the Lord's labourer, which I trust I am, He will find me work in His large vineyard. The chief of my hearers are poor persons, and they are very desirous for me to continue amongst them. They who are enlightened rejoice at the thought of my leaving the Church of England, for I have not a single hearer who is evidently a child of God that does not testify against the National Establishment.

I have been induced, from various reasons, to think about settling at Abingdon. Some poor friends thought a small piece of ground might be purchased to build a chapel on, and there was a probability of my having it ; but last night I had an answer sent me in the negative. Though Abingdon contains 5,000 or 6,000 people, I scarcely think it possible to get a piece of ground to build a chapel upon. Abingdon is by far the most suitable situation, and very many of my present hearers could go there as conveniently, or more so, than come to Sutton.

The chapel would be the very plainest building, with all open seats ; and as those who desire the gospel in these parts are obliged to eat their bread by the sweat of their brow, of course I could not ask them for sixpence, whilst I have so much of my own. But our souls are so wrapped up in thick clay, and earthbound, that when an opportunity offers of making a little sacrifice of our abundance for Christ's sake, we are almost ready to make an excuse. If we were called upon to sell our houses and lands, and share them with the poor children of God, we should have something of the spirit of Ananias and Sapphira, in desiring to keep back part of the price. But as God opens our eyes by His blessed Spirit, to see more of the wondrous sacrifice that has been made for us, we shall more willingly offer body, soul and estate to His service. "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." How awful ! The generality of professors are endeavouring to serve two masters ; for when they have an opportunity of serving Christ, they are inclined to count the sovereigns, for fear they shall do too much. "Where the treasure is, there will the heart be also."

If a chapel be built at Abingdon, or elsewhere, a few will contribute who have the means, if not resident in this neighbourhood; but, if not, I trust my heart will not prove so devoid of grace as not willingly to build it myself. A day will soon arrive when it will be made known how much we have spent in the gratification of our own lusts, and how little for Christ. When He lived in this world self was out of the question with Him. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant."

Pray for me that I may have more grace and be more spiritually minded, and manifest more of a single eye to God's glory. Religion is not in word but in *power*. We are so inclined "to walk according to the course of this world." My flesh does not like giving up a very comfortable home, and a living altogether worth £140. It would make excuses, and has done so. But neither you, nor I, nor any other interested person, as a member of the Church of England, can give an opinion on the subject. "A gift even blinds the eyes of the wise." I think many are harassed about continuing in her, but it is the Lord's time when they shall come out, so that they may not "be partakers of her plagues."

I intend to go to London next week to resign, it being necessary to go before a notary; consequently, next Sunday will be my last. I do not at present see what I shall do, but I think of continuing in my vicarage a few weeks longer, and then I think of taking lodgings in Abingdon.

My congregations do not diminish, for last Sunday I think I scarcely ever saw more in my church. Several chapels will be open to me occasionally; but, of course, my chief interest is with those whom the Lord has called by my ministry, and those who are spiritual amongst my hearers.

As my Letter will be printed in London, I shall order about 200 to be sent to you from thence, and I will thank you to send Markham fifty, and tell him he is welcome to them, to sell them and keep the money, for he sent me as a present twenty-five of my sermons. You may give all my relatives two each; that is, to a family; and what you have left out of fifty, you may give to poor people, or whomsoever you please; and then there will be a hundred left to sell. The price will be about threepence each. As many will wonder why I should leave the Church, I think it well to let them know my reasons.

The times seem very momentous, considering the very disturbed state of the country, and a daily expectation of the spreading of the cholera. Men's hearts may be said to be failing them, for fear of what is coming upon the earth. But God's people are safe; I trust that through the grace of God we shall find many led by the Spirit to seek the Lord.

I am anxious to know how you are going on at Oakham in religion. It is up-hill work to contend against the world, the flesh, and the devil.

Bulteel has caused much confusion amongst his hearers. Of course the established and spiritually-minded have not changed with him. One man may be induced to change, but a body cannot be so easily moved. I have had much conversation with him on the subject, but of course we differ. What is man?

How is the Lord dealing with your soul? Is He letting His light shine more fully into your heart? Are you more dead to the world? Do you heartily desire to have more of a work of grace upon your heart? The head travels much faster than the heart. Self-denial, taking up a daily cross, and following of Christ, are but little understood in the present day. But we are to walk in His steps. We have so much pride; till grace brings that down, we shall not suffer much for Christ. Have you ever felt a deep sense of your sinfulness, and a powerful testimony of God's Spirit showing you your completeness through the righteousness of Jesus Christ? Does your Father purge you, that you should bring forth more fruit? You will find the way to heaven is through much tribulation. Do you read your Bible much? Can you say that you do not walk according to the course of this world? Many such-like questions, if applied with power, might be profitable in humbling us, which we much need.

Yours in the bonds of the everlasting covenant,

William Tiptaft.

XVIII

"If I love my money more than Christ, woe is me!"

Sutton, Nov. 29th, 1831.

My dear Brother,—I went to London last week, and resigned my living; and I hope that my Letter containing my reasons will be published to-morrow.

I have bought a small piece of land at Abingdon to build a chapel on, for I feel constrained to remain in this neighbourhood, as nearly all my hearers are very poor, and would not be able to pay a minister if one could be had for money. So you may send word to Mr. W., that I cannot accept his kind offer and invitation to go to N., as I am about building a chapel at Abingdon, in this neighbourhood, where but very little knowledge of Christ is manifested. I have a chapel lent to me in my village till mine is built, where I preached last Sunday. It will hold, when full, about three or four hundred ; but it will not at present contain all my hearers. On next Sunday I am to preach twice at Wallingford, to an established church, which invited me to become their pastor.

It has made rather a sensation in this neighbourhood, particularly as I am about to remain. Many were hoping that I should no longer be a troubler of Israel in these parts ; and on Saturday last a paragraph was in the Oxford paper about me. I feel much comfort in my mind now I am free, and I think that the Lord never gave me so much liberty and power as He did last Sunday evening. But already I perceive that I and my hearers will be more hated and persecuted.

I had much difficulty in obtaining a piece of freehold land in Abingdon ; but now I have succeeded in obtaining a piece, in frontage 30 feet, and 48 feet 8 in. deep, for which I am to give £105, which is £3 10s. a foot. It is about the same price as Bulteel gave for his. There are 20,000 bricks to be taken up on the land, at £2 per 1,000, which the vendor intended to build with. I have no money to pay for them, and so must consult with you what I am to do. As I said in my last, my hearers could not build the chapel, if they were sold up ; and Paul says, "Let not one be eased and another burdened," therefore I shall have the pleasure to make the sacrifice in Christ's cause. I have the part, and best part, of my furniture to sell, if not all ; for, perhaps, I may take lodgings at Abingdon, unfurnished. My chapel is to be 48 feet long, and 30 feet wide. It will at first, I think, be built without a gallery, and will hold about 400 to sit down in, and galleries might be made, to hold 200 more. Now I know not who will give me a few pounds towards it. If we be brought to consider what Christ sacrificed for us, and how little we sacrifice for Him, we might blush. And how soon persecution may arise to strip us of every farthing, so that we might be obliged to wander, "destitute, afflicted, and tormented," or how soon a revolution or famine might sweep us away. If I love my money more than Christ, woe is me!

Conscience tells me I ought rather to stop here than go to ——, as they are so well able to pay a minister. I cannot think my plain kind of preaching would long be received among them, for they are too much of this world.

I have no doubt you will understand what I want; and I hope that the Lord will direct you as my helper in this case. If my signature is needed, I care not about two or three letters in postage.

I dare say I shall be accounted a fool for spending my money and time for naught. The worldlings about here begin to think there is something particular in my religion that induces me to give up my comfortable house and living, and share the burdens with the poor. Religion is worth nothing, if there be not a power in it.

I shall send you the Letters according to promise, but I dare not wait to send this letter with them on account of the delay, as two important things are at stake. I know not when a vicar will be appointed. Some one is coming to-morrow to look at the house. I probably may continue two or three weeks longer there. I shall go to Abingdon to live.

Yours most affectionately,

WILLIAM TIPTAFT.

P.S.—Give my love to all God's people. I rejoice exceedingly that more seem to be seeking. I trust that it will prove the Lord's work.

XIX

"None can keep alive his own soul."

Abingdon, Dec. 30th, 1831.

My dear Brother,—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of a draft, due yesterday, for £200; but I have not returned a promissory note for the same, as I most probably shall want more in a few months, and then one note will save expense.

My chapel walls will be ready for the roof in two or three days. It will be a plain building, but substantial. I bought as much land as cost £125, and, together with my vestry-room, the chapel will seat between 400 and 500. I have contrived to have the vestry-room made so that the people can hear as well as in the chapel, or it may be made private with slides, and I have a room over it that serves for a gallery. There will, I think, be no gallery in the chapel at present, but the generality of the people believe it will be wanted. I do not exactly know the expense, but I imagine it will cost altogether about £430, which, together with the land, makes the large sum of £555. As I do not urge subscriptions, very few seem anxious to share in the expense. I have had letters from two friends to say that they shall not give anything, as I have ample means to build it myself. I trust that I shall not covet a single farthing from a poor labourer, so that his children would be deprived of bread. Much covetousness lurks in our evil nature. From the prophet to the priest they all went after it in former days ; and as it was then, so it is now.

I have taken possession of my lodgings. I slept there last night for the first time. They were unfurnished, and so I have brought part of my furniture with me. They are consistent with my preaching, and I trust Christ is saying to me: "Zaccheus, make haste and come down." If we were called upon to sell all that we have,—houses, land, &c., to be one common stock,—we should find how hard it is for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. We have so little faith, we would rather trust to a rent-roll, or a dividend in the funds, than to God's promises. If we make a little sacrifice, we are ready to say, "Come and see my zeal for the Lord." Pride must come down. I acknowledge that I have much to come down, and there is much to be brought down at Oakham before great grace will be manifest. We want things to go on well with body *and* soul, but it never was so, and never will be so. Those who are seeking creature comforts will not at the same time find spiritual consolations.

I trust that the Lord will keep us from a desire of pleasing men. Remember, if any man love the world, &c. The rich children of God can see only one side of God's countenance, and they have but an obscure view of that ; precious faith they know little of. Now, suppose you were not called by grace to walk in a strait and narrow way, and to be a peculiar person, "zealous of good works," how would your mode of living differ from your present ? Are you walking in tribulation's path ? Do you understand self-denial, and enduring hardness for Christ's sake ?

Since I published my Letter, a friend of mine has left the Church of England, by name Brenton, the only son of Sir Jahleel Brenton, Bart., Governor of Greenwich Hospital. I am blamed as the cause, he being intimate with me. His father, I trust, is a good man; for the sermon which Brenton preached on the occasion he sent to his father, and he returned an answer, saying that he would rather see him act in that conscientious manner than attain the highest preferment. His father could have procured him a good living soon. The cause of his leaving so abruptly as he did was the objection to bury a very wicked man, who died without the slightest penitence. He has published the sermon on the occasion, and advertised it in the "Record." I have a neighbouring clergyman who cannot conscientiously go on in the present system; and he is going to endeavour to excommunicate; but he knows not the difficulties.

If the Lord separate the faithful ministers from the Establishment, it will then fall without doubt. Light makes darkness manifest. Before any one ought to condemn me, they ought to prove my objections to be of no weight.

Let me hear from you soon, and let me know how the work of the Lord is going on amongst you. We can spend anything upon that vile monster, self; but when we are called on to lay anything out for Christ, we stick at a penny and scotch at a groat. A day of reckoning will come for all this. Christ hath said, "Occupy till I come," and He will say, "Give an account of thy stewardship." Pray for me that the Lord may open my covetous and selfish heart, and cause me to give freely for His sake; for "there is that scattereth, and yet increaseth." If we spent as much every year for Christ as we do to feed our pride, our light would shine more than it does. I shall feel obliged to you if you will send me what money is due to me when the 8th of January comes.

If I had a carnal wife, with a family, perhaps I should not so willingly build a chapel and preach for naught. Take my advice and have as little to do with the world as you can help. Desire not to be a potter of thick clay. I very likely may, if the Lord will, pay you a visit this spring, before my chapel is completed; but I have plenty of preaching. There is but little vital godliness anywhere, and very few ministers are led into the great mysteries of the gospel. So few know the power of godliness, or the preciousness of Christ's blood, or the love of God shed abroad in the heart. If there be no root to a man's religion, it soon withers and dies. None can keep alive his own soul. When you talk with professors upon the subject of religion, ask them what they know of these things experimentally.

Yours affectionately in the Lord,
W. T.

XX

"True religion is the life of God in the soul."

Abingdon, Feb. 25th, 1832.

My dear Brother,—You will, perhaps, now think it time for me to answer your kind letter containing a draft for £42. Believe me, I am fully sensible of your kindness in taking so much trouble in my behalf.

Since I last wrote to you I have been actively engaged in preaching God's word; but not without giving offence, for I find the cross has not ceased. I preached at Reading about a month ago in a large chapel, and it was very crowded; and, this last week I have been to see Mr. Hitchcock, of Devizes, who seceded about six years ago from the Established Church, and is now a minister at a Baptist chapel there. I preached on Tuesday evening at Trowbridge, in the chapel of an old and faithful servant of the Lord, John Warburton, to some hundreds of persons; and on Wednesday evening at Devizes. On Thursday I was severely lampooned in the "Devizes Gazette"; and the "Reading Chronicle" has to-day a copy of it. I sent you a specimen from Devizes, having an old one given to me. The cross is not to be escaped, if we are to enter into glory.

My Letter to the bishop is now rapidly selling. About 3,000 have been dispersed, and another edition is wanted. Newspapers insert it; and a bookseller at Southampton has printed it without asking my leave. One reply has been published at Reading, and another at Salisbury. I have not yet seen the latter; the former strengthens my arguments. There are truths contained in my Letter so supported by the word of God that they are not able to overthrow them.

My chapel is nearly finished, and is to be opened on the 25th of March; Mr. Warburton and Mr. Hitchcock are expected to preach. Hundreds will crowd into the chapel and the two vestries; but it is supposed scarcely half will be able to enter.

I am looked upon with an eye of contempt, and am considered a troubler of Israel. Some say I am a good man; others say that I deceive the people. Though the Lord enables me to be bold and faithful, I by no means want chapels to preach in, for I am engaged to preach in several that I have never yet entered. The more the Lord shows to me my darkness in spiritual things, the more clearly do I discern the real state of others. You know that profession is not possession; and when the religion of the bulk of professors is tried by the word of God, how awfully deficient it appears!

I am living in a very quiet part of Abingdon, in a small room, together with two bedrooms, all which I furnished myself. I have a man and his wife in the same house with me, who wait upon me. I live in a plain way, and find my expenses small. I have scarcely any one to visit me but poor people, whose company is the most profitable, and they do not feed my pride. All the best of my furniture has been sold by auction, and it sold remarkably well.

There is much excitement in this neighbourhood, through the building of my chapel; but they know not what to do. I do hope and trust that it will be made manifest, that it is for the Lord's glory. The truth has been studiously kept out of the town, and I shall rejoice to find that the Lord has a few hidden ones here, for gross darkness prevails. In this very town, though so large, I cannot find ten who can give a satisfactory account of the work of regeneration in the soul My chapel has a plain appearance. It is partly pewed, for I bought the whole of an inside of a chapel at Reading for £25, with pulpit, &c.

I still continue in the same mind about not taking the hard-earned pence of the poor people, whilst I have so much of my own, and am clothed in fine linen, and fare sumptuously every day. Let me not be eased, and another burdened. When the gospel was first preached, those who had land and houses sold them, and laid the money at the apostles' feet. The gospel has not that effect upon the rich professors of the present day. But I consider the love of money is the cause.

You will be soon "a speckled bird" in Oakham; but you have suffered very little in the Lord's cause at present,- not many trials outward, and not many inward. You know little or nothing of the furnace which is needful to take away our dross. If people are not opposed by Satan they know nothing of the power of godliness. Every Christian man must know the plague of his own heart. The Psalms and various parts of the Scriptures will not be understood unless we are brought to feel sensibly the same trials that the saints of old went through. Many think they are going to heaven when Satan makes no opposition, for they have nothing but head-notions. Consequently they make no encroachments upon Satan's dominions, and he will therefore show to them no opposition.

Sometimes Satan tempts me to think that I am making a great sacrifice; but I ought to blush for shame. What is the sacrifice? All I have, from whom does it come? If I built myself a good house, to gratify my flesh and pride, the professors could better understand it. We can spend hundreds upon our lusts, but we sparingly bestow pounds in Christ's cause. If the love of money is the root of all evil, from it all evil must necessarily arise. May the Lord deliver us from it; may He give us more of the mind of Christ, who made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Himself the form of a servant. Pride is a reigning principle. How very little we really need in this life! "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

When we are led to have a view of the Cross, how very different does everything appear. We are very fools, but it takes us many years to learn such a truth. Vital godliness is but little known in the present day. There are very few who can give a good account of their call by grace, and those who are really regenerate enjoy but little communion with God. When you talk upon the subject of religion, keep people close to the work of grace upon the heart. Let them know that they must learn their saving interest in Christ under the testimony of the Spirit. True religion is the life of God in the soul. Scores can speak of doctrines and the plan of salvation as clearly as possible, who know nothing of the kingdom of God within. Few contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints; and there are very few who are outcasts for their godliness.

My old friend Bulteel and I can have now no communion. He holds the doctrine of universal pardon, is now distinguished for universal charity, and accuses God's children, who hold the doctrine of particular redemption, as having a bad spirit. Christ was accused of having one, and so must His household. He has a large chapel building. He and I scarcely ever meet, for we differ widely, though it is reported in distant places that I have fallen into his errors. May the Lord hold me up, and I shall be safe!

The present day is not a time of trial, therefore hypocrites abound. The heap of professing Christians would be very small if the chaff were sifted out. If a persecuting time were to arise, and prisons were crowded with God's children, it would change the present scene. We are going to heaven in silver slippers. We have the wind at our backs. We are little hated and despised, and know but little of sharp conflicts with the world, the flesh, and the devil.

Affectionately yours in the best of bonds,

W. TIPTAFT.

XXI

"What a mere mockery is a profession of religion which costs a man nothing!"

Abingdon, May 4th, 1832.

My dear Brother.—You most probably have been daily expecting a letter from me, but as you especially wished to have further information respecting the bishop's treatment towards me, I have waited, intending to give you the earliest intimation of it; but I have not yet heard anything more on the subject, and know nothing of his intention. But this evening a young clergyman who lives near Oxford called upon, and drank tea with me, and he told me that his rector has lately seen the bishop, and the bishop told him that he thought favourably of me, and spoke well of me; nevertheless, the bishop remarked that I had not spoken very gently of him. This is rather remarkable. I do not apprehend any interference from the bishop for the future, especially on his present charge.

I am going on much as usual, giving offence to many, and pleasing a few. I have many invitations to preach; but I am not much inclined to leave Abingdon for the present. I have great numbers of hearers, so that my chapel is not large enough, although it will seat 500, and many can stand in the aisles, &c., but many cannot even enter the door, and they are nearly all poor people. I believe the Lord is with us, and will, I trust, continue to bless us. I am not a great favourite amongst professors and formalists, nor do I wish it, for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.

I am glad that you liked my Letters to the bishop. Some do not, but they scarcely know what to say against them. The truth is very powerful, and man cannot gainsay it. The Lord shows me more fully, that there is no more religion than is felt, known, and experienced in the soul. There must be the kingdom of God within; and if this work of the Spirit is not described in some measure by ministers, they cannot minister comfort to God's tried and afflicted family. Many hold a form of sound words, but they must know more, or they will never go to glory. They must be brought to see themselves in need of a Saviour, or they will never speak of the preciousness of His blood, or sing His praises. Many talk about religion; but ask them about a work of grace upon the heart, and they will immediately change the subject. There is but very, very little vital godliness, and the more you know of your spiritual darkness, the more fully will you discover the darkness of all around you. I have borrowed what money I wanted, more than you lent me, of an intimate friend of mine.

I should like to sell a field, if I could, for about £500. I have laid out more money in the Lord's cause than many are inclined to do; nevertheless, I have a very vile and covetous heart. How closely the disease cleaves to us! it is between the very joints. How little do we understand self-denial, and making sacrifices in the Lord's cause! But what a mere mockery is a profession of a religion which costs a man nothing! He wants creature comforts and spiritual consolations, the friendship of the world and the favour of God; and, if so, we want what we shall never enjoy together.

I liked many things in your last letter, but I fear, from what you say, religion is very flat amongst you.

Yours affectionately in the Lord,

W. Tiptaft.

P.S.—The Lord has decidedly blessed my preaching lately, I am rejoiced to say. I am not much of a favourite amongst the clergy. Philpot has paid me a visit this week, and heard Warburton in my chapel.*

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* *See* Introduction, p. 118.

XXII

"*True and vital godliness will ever meet with much opposition.*"

Abingdon, July 6th, 1832.

My dear Brother,—According to your request, I write to say when I hope to pay you a visit. I intend, God willing, to be at Oakham soon after the 15th, but on what day I cannot say. I will remain with you over the Sunday, July 22nd, and hope to return to my own flock for the 29th. I shall not think proper to preach in the Riding School, if it be not licensed; for I wish in no way to act contrary to the laws, whilst such great toleration is granted. But if the Oakham people are desirous to hear me, Hinmers, most probably, would let me have his chapel, for I do not imagine such a large number would give me a second hearing as attended last time.

Since I last wrote to you, I have been preaching in various places, many of considerable size, and to large concourses of people. One of the effects of the bishop's threatened interference has been that he has been an excellent trumpeter for me; and the newspapers, still continuing to make their remarks upon me, cause many to come and hear the babbler out of curiosity.

What you say about religion in your parts is very unsatisfactory. It seems that you are without bold and faithful witnesses for the Lord. You do not tell me about men who take forth the precious from the vile. Real religion still seems to me very rare. Very few can give a good account of the Lord's gracious dealings with their souls. Few understand the truth as it is in Jesus. I think there is but little religion in Abingdon and its vicinity, but I find very few places where there is more. True and vital godliness will ever meet with much opposition. The world ever did and ever will hate the truth; and why professors meet with little or no opposition, and even the children of God, is because they differ so little from the world. Their life and conversation give no offence, because they not only mix with formalists, but even with those who have no religion at all. The children of God are in such a weak state that they are not seen and known, and the religion of the rich and respectable is more doubtful to me from day to day. If they enter heaven, they must indeed go through much tribulation, and they, at present, seem to have little or none. I feel assured that my preaching would not be so well received as it is, if it were more consistent with God's word, in plainness and faithfulness, saying to each individual, "Thou art the man." The Spirit's great work in teaching is, to show us more what we are by nature, and what we are by grace; and if there be no deep discoveries of our vileness by nature, making known to us what hell-deserving sinners we are, we shall not be brought fully to understand the riches of God's grace.

I hope that I shall find the Christian friends at Oakham more deeply established in the truth, more sensible of God's love towards them, more humbled under a deep sense of their unworthiness, and in a much greater degree separated from the mere professors around them. God's children need much humbling and stripping, much emptying from vessel to vessel; and a furnace, frequently, to take away the dross which gathers so very fast. You can find hundreds crying out, "Lord, Lord!" when you can scarcely find one who can tell you what the Lord has done for his soul.

I have as yet a very good congregation. There is a door open and effectual, and many adversaries. I am quite a "speckled bird" in these parts. My two most intimate friends, who visit me, and whom I visit, amongst the respectable, are Philpot and Husband, two ministers in the Church of England. There is scarcely another that I am intimate with; but these two are not ashamed of me.

Give my best love to Deborah, and tell her I shall be glad to hear from her own lips what the Lord is doing for her soul; what conflicts with, and victories over, Satan; what opposition from the world; what love-visits from Jesus; and what consolations, under all her tribulations for righteousness' sake.

Yours most affectionately, in the best bonds,

WM. TIPTAFT.

XXIII

"If you have no crooked paths for Christ to make straight, you will know but little of real and true prayer to Him."

Abingdon, Aug. 15th, 1832.

My dear Brother,—I shall be glad to hear how the Lord is pleased to manifest Himself among you at Oakham. Real religion is so contrary to a mere profession, that you must expect much reproach and scorn for contending for it. But there is much speculative religion in the present day. Many are well able to judge of the general and gross darkness which prevails, and contend for a form of sound words, but are very doubtful characters, and show they have never felt the power of the truths of which they speak, in their own souls. You and I have a very great deal to learn, and we need much purifying, when we consider these words, that they that are "after the Spirit do mind the things of the Spirit"; and "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

It is a great mercy that God's children are dandled on the knee, and put into the bosom a little at first; for if they had a view of their difficulties, they would faint. But it is a sweet promise: "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." The children of Israel were not allowed to see at first the warlike sons of Anak, lest they should be alarmed. There is nothing very alarming in religion whilst little but outward things are known; but when the fountains of the great deep of human corruptions are broken up, God's children then learn the root of sin, the "needs-be" for Christ's death and sufferings; are stripped, in a measure, from self-righteousness, and are astonished to find what Pharisees they have been, when they have all the time been renouncing it. It is very painful to the flesh to become nothing. But the more the Lord's Spirit operates upon our spirit, the more unintelligible will our language be to those who know not God.

Do you find many at Oakham, and in the neighbourhood, who are anxious for a God-fearing minister to preach to them? If you begin to take the offensive part against Satan's kingdom, you must expect many wounds and strokes. He is a powerful enemy, and in our own strength we should not stand against him long. The great offence in religion is separating from professors, and those who deny the power. If you have no mountains for Christ to make plain, and no crooked paths for Him to make straight, you will know but little of real and true prayer to Him.

I shall be glad to hear of Deborah growing in grace. She has many fetters in her household, and with her children; nevertheless, the Lord will support her and strengthen her, as he has done hitherto.

W. T.

XXIV

"*Faith is not worth anything if it be not tried.*"

Abingdon, Aug. 27th, 1832.

My dear Brother,—My chapel, hitherto, continues to be very crowded. Yesterday it was particularly so both times. To-day I have had Mr. M. and his wife to drink tea with me. He is the vicar of a large parish about seven miles from here. He asked me if I had ever been confined through insanity. He had been told it for a fact; and though he said he always defended me, he could not contradict it, though he had no reason to believe it.

The great question is not whether we hear in a church or chapel, but whether we hear the truth for ourselves, whether we receive it as the word of God in our hearts. Real religion will find its way to the heart, and an effect will be manifest in the life. It is the Spirit's work that is so little understood in the present day. It is the work of God the Holy Ghost to convince of sin, to break the heart, and to plough up the fallow ground. If this work is not wrought in a measure in the soul none will stand the day of trial, for they have no root. The kingdom of God is within you; and when the Lord has taken a poor sinner in hand He will never leave him, but will surely purge away his dross and tin. He will slay his idols, and rend him from those things he so much loves; nor will he be aware how many idols he has till God shows him in a measure the deceitfulness of his heart. The more God's children are taught spiritually, the greater fools do they become in their own eyes; and the more they know of their own wicked and vile state by nature, the more are they astonished that God should show mercy to such poor worms of the earth.

Real religion is indeed foolishness to the world, and the feelings of God's children are indeed a puzzle to the mere professors. But you will find how vainly you have thought and talked when the Lord shows you greater abominations in your evil heart. Then you will understand how everything is opposed to the work of God in the soul of man. Then you will find that there are fightings without and fears within. When God's children are brought into fiery trials, and persecutions from Satan's darts, the scoffings and mockings of the Hagar race are no more to them than water upon a duck's back. But God sees fit to teach His children many afflicting lessons, that they may be partakers of His holiness. If your religion is of God, which I trust it is, you will have many difficulties to encounter from various quarters; and when you cannot realise any enjoyment in religion, and all things seem against you, you will think yourself very foolish for making a profession, and will be desirous of going back for leeks and onions to Egypt. But if you were losing your best patients for Christ's sake, and poverty were staring you in the face, you could even then bless God if He gave you a comforting and reviving view of the work done upon the Cross for you. If Christ is in the boat, we can smile at the storm. If you are kept faithful, and are enabled to adorn God's doctrine, you surely will be much opposed. Remember how closely you will be watched; how every remark will be weighed. You will not receive the least quarter in any respect, and many will wait for your halting. You will not be enabled to make a bargain with any one without their endeavouring to discover a secret love of gain in your heart.

Your determination not to hear any minister at Oakham will give great offence, and bring with it a cross. The word of God fully justifies you: "Take heed what ye hear"; and, "Beware of false prophets." If you cannot receive a man as a sent servant of God you are certainly right, and your conduct will powerfully affect the minds of others, who even do go, but not without pricks of conscience. The consistent life of a man of God is an epistle to be seen and read of all men, and he wonderfully influences others without his in any way being aware of it. He glorifies God, and lets his light shine. We need to be much in prayer, and very watchful, considering what wicked and deceitful hearts we have, and what an unruly member our tongue is.

When God leads His children into a discovery of their fallen state there are many painful lessons to learn; but faith is not worth anything if it be not tried. God's children are frequently tempted to wish they had never made a profession; but if they attempt to return they cannot, for they are kept by the mighty power of God. I hope that the Lord will be with you and bless you, and make you willing to suffer all things for Christ's sake.

Yours most affectionately,
In the bonds of the everlasting gospel,
WILLIAM TIPTAFT.

XXV

"We are but stewards; and 'Occupy, till I come' is stamped upon all I possess."

Abingdon, Sept. 8th, 1832.

My dear Brother,—I, without a post's delay, send you an answer to your last kind letter. I am pleased with many things contained in it; but you and I have learnt but little as yet in the school of Christ. I am glad to find you are still sanguine in the Lord's cause. You will, ere long, have many difficulties and obstacles cast in your way. I hope that the Lord will pour out a spirit of prayer and supplication upon you, and that your prayers may be heard, and you may have a man amongst you after God's own heart.

The ground for my chapel was very dear, as there is scarcely a piece of freehold land to be bought in Abingdon. My chapel and vestry nearly cover the ground. Of course land would not be so dear with you. I would not advise you to build a very large chapel, and let it be built in the plainest style. I have reason to rejoice that my preaching was not without effect amongst you. If the Lord will bless my labours, I may say with David, "Let them curse, but bless Thou."

On the 30th of this month I am engaged to preach at Swindon, and I have just received a letter from a lady of the committee of the Aged Pilgrims' Friend Society, to ask me to preach a sermon in aid of the funds of that society. It is a good society. Mr. Gadsby, Mr. Nunn, and Mr. Hardy have preached for it; and when I heard Hardy, about a year ago, I was then asked if I would preach, and I said I had no objection. Now they have reminded me of my promise.

It seems that there is a shaking amongst the dry bones at Oakham. It is a very great mercy to have even the slightest real hope that we are made partakers of grace. What are all the riches and advantages of this world compared to a good hope through grace? The world seems so closely to cleave to the flesh of many who we hope have the root of the matter in them, that they cannot rise. Their minds are clogged. It is very sweet to the soul to feel a deadness to all things here below; but we shall find, as long as we are in the body, that the world is a very great enemy. If you are bold in confessing Christ, you must expect many an adverse dart from Satan.

"Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off." You will most probably be led ere long to find very great difficulties and crosses in the spiritual warfare. You will learn what it is to faint and be weary; but if God has begun the work He will perform it till the day of Jesus Christ. The Lord has not brought you yet to feel in a great degree the plague of your own heart; but you will know more of that ere long.

I feel anxious that the Lord's work may be revived amongst you. Very few in the present day are experiencing much of the power of the gospel in their own hearts.

I should like to sell a part of my Frisby Estate. A man does not like sinking in the world; but it is a blessed thing when our sinking is for the exaltation of Christ. We are but stewards; and "Occupy till I come" is stamped upon all that I possess. Nothing manifests more the power of religion to the world than liberality in money matters, and when we seek not our own ends. But we are so desirous of making provision for the flesh, and seek our own so much more than the things of Christ.

With Christian love to God's dear children, believe me,

Yours most affectionately,

W. Tiptaft.

XXVI

"Creature comforts and spiritual consolations very seldom go together."

Abingdon, Sept. 20th, 1832.

My dear brother,—Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied unto you abundantly through Christ Jesus our Lord. I rejoice to hear that you are counted worthy to suffer in some degree in the cause of Christ. It is a circumstance that so seldom occurs, that I have stronger reasons to believe that you are a partaker of the grace of God. The general religion of the present day is attended with so little power that even thousands who profess to love Christ can scarcely give a single instance of suffering, either from the fiery darts of the wicked one, or the hatred and malice of a wicked world. Your trials, persecutions, and sufferings on account of your religion are too small to cause even a murmur at present, but they may increase and abound before long. Satan and his allies care about nothing but the power;

for where that is, the man must act, and faithfulness and decision will surely meet with frowns and opposition. If you have all manner of evil said of you falsely, and lose your practice, and see poverty staring you in your face—if you at the same time have a conscience void of offence towards God and man, you will indeed be favoured of the Lord. It seems to me not very likely that you are to be honoured in this way at present. You have too little grace; the image of Christ is not sufficiently impressed upon your heart, and you know at present too little of the operations of the Spirit upon your soul. But the Lord is a sovereign, and can magnify His power in your weakness. If you have lost any patients and worldly advantages through your boldness in Christ's cause, you are pronounced blessed. It is a gift and much to be prized, for it is given to you not only to believe, but to suffer for His sake. Paul prayed to know the fellowship of Christ's sufferings; and offences must come, but woe to them by whom they come. Paul says, "To them it is an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God," for "on their part He is evil spoken of, but on your part He is glorified." You have Christ and all the blessed promises on your side; but for them there is nothing but woes and judgments.

I believe that no sins are so quickly and so severely punished as those which are committed against the Lord's own family. It would be better for them "to have a millstone tied round their necks and to be cast into the middle of the sea;" and God says, "Whoso toucheth you, toucheth the apple of Mine eye" (Zech. ii. 8).

I hope that you will be kept from having unkind and uncharitable feelings against those who may attempt to injure you. They are fulfilling God's word as well as yourself. Nature is the same; consequently, let the power of the gospel be manifested, enmity will be quickly displayed. I hope that the Lord may honour you as he did good Nehemiah, by putting it into your heart to seek the good of God's dear children in Oakham, and you will find, as Nehemiah did, Sanballats and Tobiahs, who will be exceedingly grieved, who will mock and despise you (Neh. ii. 10, 19, 20). But as your day is so your strength will be. If you have deep trials, losses, and sufferings, you will have the consolations and the sweet promises applied; and when you read the latter part of Heb. xi. you will scarcely be able to see how you are to suffer in any measure as they did, under present circumstances. God will take care of His own family. Yes, he will cut off hundreds of rich Nabals rather than one of His own shall not have that which is good.

I am not afraid so much of your suffering in temporals as being puffed up with pride that you are counted worthy to suffer. The devil works with deep-laid schemes. He knows that your heart is not set upon the gratification of the flesh, and upon making large provision for your children, in order that they may fulfil the lusts of the flesh.

I rejoice that you are not in a dead calm at Oakham. If Satan roar, it is a sign that his kingdom is in danger, and we shall never see love and union amongst Christians till there is power enough in religion to excite persecution; through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom. It is an alarming truth for many professors. They may indeed cry, "Surely we are in By-path Meadow, very easy and comfortable." Whilst in such a way, they have no need of that sweet promise being applied: "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass."

Since I wrote to you I have received a letter from J. He offends many by his decision and self-denial. He has furnished his house for less than £60, which has very much offended his friends, though they are evangelical people. He has deal tables and no carpets, and that way of living is not very satisfactory to flesh-pleasing Christians. He is not a legalist; he is taught self-denial, and when a man can act a little like Paul, he can preach with authority. Religion suits people in general as long as it brings no cross, but when their Isaacs are to be sacrificed, they seem determined to wait till they can find an easier way to heaven. The Lord must lead us and teach us by His blessed Spirit how to act. I hope that a spirit of grace and supplication will be poured down upon you, so that your cry may reach the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, and if He sends you one of His servants, He will fit him for the work. If a minister preaches with power, he will give offence; and if his eyes are enabled to discern the formality and hypocrisy of professors, he will have a host of devout people crying out against him; but wisdom is justified of her children. You will be able to see more of the great want of spirituality in the professing world. It must be heart-work to give offence, and that is the only work the world will oppose, and Satan will attempt to destroy.

How few sensible sinners can you find! How few have ever been led deeply into a knowledge of their own evil hearts! How few know anything of being justified by the righteousness of Christ! How few have been stripped of their own filthy rags, and made willing to accept the righteousness of Christ! You must find yourself very ignorant when you meet with a person who can fully enter into a work of grace upon the heart. I have no doubt you are tried in your mind whether the work is really begun by God; and the more the Lord teaches you, the greater fool you will become in your own opinion. Religion is a personal thing. Dost thou believe on the Son of God? There are glorious mansions for God's dear children, but they must be made meet for them. Many are desirous to have Paul's faith and joys, but they do not want his poverty, affliction, and extreme sufferings and trials. Creature comforts and spiritual consolations very seldom go together, nor do the friendship of the world and the favour of God. When you lose the friendship of the world, and are really losing a large part of your income, your own heart, as well as wife, children, and friends, will cry out as Peter did, "Spare thyself." May you answer in the words of Christ, if it be really for the Lord's cause. You are to be as wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove. You are on a hill. May the Lord hold you up and preserve you, and may you by continuance in well-doing put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.

I am very glad that you bear a testimony against the false prophets by testifying that you cannot hear them. If you come out from among them and be separate, you will be much hated. Husband was very pleased with your letter. I slept there last night, and met Philpot. The latter has been very much scolded by an evangelical, and chiefly because he defends me.

Yours most affectionately in Christ,

William Tiptaft.

XXVII

"It is of God's grace if we differ from the gay and foolish multitude around us."

Abingdon, Oct. 16th, 1832.

My dear Brother,—As I shall, God willing, be absent from Abingdon two or three weeks, I send you an answer to your kind letter by return of post, as you wish to hear from me again soon.

To-morrow morning I am going to visit an intimate friend a few miles from hence, who is to drive me to Cheltenham to preach there on Thursday evening. We are engaged to dine with Dr. Foot, a physician there, who is "a speckled bird" like yourself. Cheltenham is a place of great profession; there is one chapel that will admit men of truth, in which I am to preach; and I am to preach at the town of Fairford on the Friday evening, on my return. On Saturday I hope to return safely to preach in my own chapel on Sunday, and on Monday I am to go into Wiltshire, where I am engaged to preach on that evening, and on the four following evenings, in different chapels. On Sunday week I am to preach at Trowbridge for Warburton, and on my return, at Devizes, &c. I have to seek no places to preach in, but have to refuse many invitations. A fortnight ago I preached in a barn, and had such a scene as in the Riding School. It was at Stratton, about twenty-eight miles from hence, and I did not please them all. I preached morning and evening in the barn, and in the afternoon in a chapel at another village, and some one threw a stone into the chapel through the window, close behind the pulpit; but I escaped, for it hit the window-frame.

Lately I have preached a good deal, and have had very large congregations, and my own chapel as yet continues to be crowded. I think, nevertheless, I am liked better here than at Oakham. Many wait for my halting, and if God were to let me or any of my set fall, it would be a good feast for the Pharisees; for God says, "They eat up My people's sins as if they eat bread," but may the Lord keep us humble, crying out, "Hold us up, and we shall be safe."

I have had an invitation from Northampton, to go there a Lord's day, for they have no preacher, or on a week-day evening. The day is not fixed for my preaching in London for the Aged Pilgrims' Friend Society. I should not be surprised when I am there if the Lord lead me to Oakham, so that I may take Northampton in my way back. I make no promises or arrangements; but I should like to come to see you, for I think you are more alive in your souls than I am. It might strike a spark from my flinty heart, and the Lord might lead me to say such things as might encourage some of you (Rom. i. 11, 12).

From the various accounts I receive from you, I am encouraged to believe that there is a small band in Oakham "whose hearts God has touched ;" there is opposition to you, and will be more so when you are more united. I am daily more fully convinced that there is no religion where there is no persecution. Where Christ is, the devil will roar, and raise all the opposition in his power. Christ says, "They have hated Me, and they will hate you also." Many have a religion now that costs them nothing ; but Christ says, "Count the cost," "The foxes have holes," &c., &c. Many find that religion works well with their temporal affairs, and through their religion they thrive and prosper. And many a minister after the flesh may bless God for sending His Son into the world, for they have taken His name in their mouths, and have made Him a stalking-horse to get more of this world's goods, and to enjoy them by Him ; some riding in their carriages, and crying out on Sundays, "We must walk in Christ's steps." They cannot say of themselves, "Jesus, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well." It will be, alas ! "Thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things." What a mercy it is to have a testimony from the Lord in being counted worthy to suffer loss and shame for His name. There must be power in true religion, and it will cause a change in a man's life and conversation. He will be brought from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God.

Paul says, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His." The shortest way of entering into a man's religion is to ask him whether he has the Spirit of Christ, and if he says, "Yes," then ask him what the Spirit of God has done for him, what change it has wrought, &c. If he can give a good scriptural account, you will say, "I have met with a brave companion ;" if he evades questioning, you can tell him you would not be in his place for a thousand worlds.

The Lord giving you grace to set your faces against Satan's ministers will make their master very malicious and spiteful ; for nothing displeases Satan so much as when you show contempt for his ministers, for they are his strongholds. Our very nature that partakes of his spirit joins with him, and the world is manifestly on the same side ; consequently, any one who "takes heed what he hears" must suffer reproach. If I go to hear a minister, I want to know who that are spiritually-minded sit under him. If I can find none of the sheep of Christ, I am sure that the minister is not a shepherd. But God will, by His grace, bring out His people from such ministers as you have at Oakham, by bringing home to their minds the following texts: "Why seek ye the living among the dead?" "What dost thou here, Elijah?" "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away;" and again, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate." When God has applied such texts with power to the heart, so that they have not received them as the word of man, but as the word of God, which effectually worketh in them that believe, neither friends nor relatives, neither good patients nor good customers, neither good masters nor good mistresses, can make them hold up the hands of false prophets, for God hath spoken unto them, and where there is the voice of a king there is power. "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they be of God."

Since I wrote the above, I have had a very pleasing young man to see me, from Oxford, to ask me to preach for them there on Sunday next, which I intend (God willing) to do between my services; for they are there without a preacher. It is lamentable to think how many are crying out for the bread of life in various large towns, and there are scarcely any ministers to give unto them a portion in season (Amos viii. 11, 12). It is a great mercy to have a desire given to us for the sincere milk of the word. It is of God's grace if we differ from the gay and foolish multitude around us.

I want to know more of what the Lord is doing for your souls at Oakham; how you are tried in your minds, whether you are really partakers of grace, and have the root in you; and what testimony you have that you shall continue to the end.

Yours very affectionately,
Wm. Tiptaft.

XXVIII

"If your religion does not bring you into crosses and losses, it is not worth much."

Abingdon, Jan. 15th, 1833.

My dear Brother,—Through persuasion and entreaty, I remained one week longer at Brighton than I expected to do. But the Lord was pleased to bless the word to my soul, and to the souls of others, so I felt constrained to remain. In passing through London, I preached twice, and the latter time was for the benefit of the Aged Pilgrims' Friend Society. I preached in

Abrahams' Chapel, Regent Street, City Road, London. It was well attended, and it was considered a good collection. I had several ministers and deacons for hearers, and the old Hebrews came out of their holes, to spy out the barrenness of the land. I believe there were many of God's children amongst my hearers. The Lord was with us, I trust, and enabled me to be faithful according to my light ; so that I kept a good conscience.

On my return, I found a letter inviting me to preach an anniversary sermon on Good Friday, in a large chapel in London ; but I declined, as I am not very anxious to preach anywhere, and especially on such occasions.

I was pleased with your last letter, and I trust that the Lord is leading you on to know Him. He has brought you out of the profane world for some time, and now He seems to be bringing you out of the professing world. You seem to know better what is not religion than what is. The Lord seems to have taught you your ignorance and insufficiency, and has made you know that there is a power attending vital godliness, and without that power man must perish. Your soul cannot feed under any ministry where the power of the gospel is not ; consequently, knowing your darkness, and your fallen state by nature, and that the form of godliness, without the power, is but a shadow, you know that all around you are in the same state by nature, so you cannot have communion with any "wise in their own conceit," and that imagine they can do something towards their own salvation. The Lord, in mercy, seems to keep your conscience honest, and constrains you to speak what you feel and believe ; therefore you cannot escape the cross, and must surely give offence. You see in what state the professors are, which they cannot ; and this true light, as far as it goes, will be a testimony and witness for the Lord. I am glad to find that you are not ashamed to confess your ignorance, foolishness, and inability. This is humbling to pride, but pride must have a fall. "Before honour is humility," and "God giveth grace to the humble, but the proud He knoweth afar off."

You seem to be learning something of the various changes in your own soul. You learn by experience that you have no desire for hearing, reading, and talking about the best things but as the Lord gives it. This will lead you to wait and pray ; and the various trials and difficulties that you meet with will necessarily work for the good of your soul. I do not wish to flatter and deceive you, though I would not quench the smoking flax. You have not at present had any sweet revelation of Christ to your soul; but you have desired it. You have not seen God's glory in the face of Christ; but a little hope has sprung in your soul that God is doing something for you, and that He will perfect His own work. It is a great mercy to have the day-star arising in your heart, and the day dawning, and you may have many difficulties before you behold Christ in His glorious manifestation.

I feel assured that you want to hear ministers who can trace the footsteps of the flock, who can describe the path that you are travelling in, and who can take up the stumbling-blocks out of your way. You want them to tell you what you have felt and experienced, and what you have not; and when they speak of repentance and faith, you want them to tell you what they mean, both in their power and in their effects, so that you may know whether you are a partaker or not. You want to have the gospel trumpet blown with a distinct sound, so that you may clearly distinguish the note; and it must be a life-giving sound, or you will not be satisfied. If there be nothing but a confusion of sounds, you will have cause to murmur. You will leave such preaching without profit, and more confused than when you went, and you will come home without the knowledge of the way you are travelling in; for such ministers do not divide the word rightly, nor their hearers; consequently, the characters of the regenerate and unregenerate not being set forth, how can a seeking soul find solid comfort? First he is comforted, and then cast down; at one time encouraged by the minister setting forth salvation as all of God, and then distressed with a conditional salvation at the end. If ministers do not preach the finished work of Christ, and hold out the breasts of consolation to the sucklings and weaklings, the name of Christ will not be as ointment poured forth, nor will the Spirit of truth bear testimony to such preaching. I believe, from what you have said to me, that you would rather read a chapter in the Bible and sing a hymn at home, than go after such ministers, "For a stranger they will not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers."

Whosoever will be a disciple of Christ must take up his cross and follow Him, through evil report as well as good report; and if your religion is not tried, and does not bring you into crosses and losses, it is not worth much. But what you have felt and handled you can boldly testify of; and when you tell the professors, from what you have experienced, that you would not rest upon their hope for salvation for a thousand worlds, they will be confused and very angry. But the truth commends itself to the conscience. You can tell them, if you do not know Christ, Christ must be known, or there will be no salvation. It is the power of godliness that will bring the cross, and it will, blessed be God's holy name, enable us also to bear it. The light which God has given you to discern the low state of the Church, and the emptiness and vanity of the mere profession of the day, will cause you to be a troubler in your neighbourhood to a certain extent. But, "as thy days, so shall thy strength be."

There must be a cross before the crown of glory, and this you will not escape if you be a son. But if it be for righteousness' sake, happy are you, for "as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so also our consolations abound by Christ." Chastenings, troubles, and afflictions will lead you to pray, and God will deliver you, and you shall glorify Him. You will strive, perhaps, to reconcile the two kingdoms, and with your family you will be powerfully tempted to endeavour to reconcile the friendship of the world with the favour of God. But the Lord will take care to lead His people by a right way to the city of habitation, and that way is sure to be rough, and thorny, and well hedged up, so that you may cry to God for help, that He may deliver, and you may bless and praise Him for His mercy and goodness.

If the Lord will, after I have been a few weeks at home with my people, I will pay you a visit. But have you a quickened people that are really hungering for the bread of life, and is there a probability that a minister would come and preach to you?

I shall be very glad to hear from you soon, and I am anxious to know how God's children are treated and cast out by the Ishmaelites. You will not suffer much persecution, because you have so little grace. When the Lord has taught you more of the fulness of Christ, and your hearts are established with grace, then you will be more faithful, and more peculiar as God's children. For "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."

Mr. Cole, of Highbury Park, who has left the Church of England, preached for me on Sunday last. He is a well-taught man in his own soul, and can well describe the operations of the Spirit upon the heart. He keeps a school, and speaks without getting gain from his ministry. He has published a little book called "The Substance of Four Sermons on Regeneration." I wish you would read it. It is a great subject to write upon, but I consider that he has handled it in a masterly way. I am going to hear him speak this evening at Oxford. He is a great friend of Mr. Chamberlain.

"Sell that thou hast, and give to the poor" is a harder lesson to learn than election; but the time may come when great sacrifices must be made for Christ's sake. Money-matters will try professors. May the Lord give us very liberal hearts, and more erase "Spare thyself," so deeply written in them. I believe your religion has induced you to be more liberal and kind to the poor; and, when that is seen, it commends itself to the consciences of them that are without. If we have less money, and at the same time less wants, we are better off; and "they that will be rich fall into a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts," &c. All things below are uncertain. "Lay up for yourselves treasures where neither moth nor rust," &c.

In the best bonds,

Wm. Tiptaft.

XXIX

"The Ministry and the Church must rise and sink together."

Abingdon, June 27th, 1833.

My dear Brother,—As you express the desire of several that I should visit you again as soon as possible, I intend being at Oakham as early in July as I conveniently can, and shall be with you to speak, if the Lord will, on the 14th in the Riding School. The time seems short since I was with you.

I am of Cole's opinion in his "New Birth," that the ministry and the church must rise and sink together. Individuals may be brought through deep trials, and taught deep things; but very few indeed can be found who have not been profited much in hearing, whether they have humility enough to confess it or not. I never heard of a church that was manifest as such without a preacher. If the soul is quickened, it will "lament for the teats," "for the young children ask bread, and no man breaketh it unto them." No great work of the Lord will go on at Oakham or elsewhere without such instruments in the hands of the Lord as preachers and builders up of the church of God. Meeting together and talking, singing a hymn and praying, will be blessed of God rather than hearing false prophets; but deadness and coldness will prevail if the gospel is not preached occasionally.

If your souls are much blessed in your meeting together without preaching, I shall rejoice, but I must assure you I shall be much surprised. Many places, as Wallingford, Chichester, &c., if they have not a preacher, read a sermon of Huntington's, or of some deep-taught minister of God.

Yours very affectionately, for Christ's sake,
WM. TIPTAFT.

XXX

"We must be a prepared people for our prepared place."

Abingdon, Sept. 11th, 1833.

My dear Brother,—I am glad to hear that your meetings are well attended. You will need encouragement, in one way or other, to keep you together meeting in the name of the Lord, for the right way is uphill, and some will be continually growing faint and weary.

My soul was much refreshed and encouraged when I was in Wilts, about ten days ago, by finding that the word preached by me in a barn there, for two Sundays last autumn, was much owned and blessed; so that it is well with me, though some curse, if God will bless. Some think my work is to go from place to place, preaching as I go, but I cannot say so, though I am sometimes inclined to think so. I have repeated invitations to go out to preach, but I scarcely know how to answer, and I cannot get an answer from God to satisfy my mind on these occasions; others, again, condemn me for going away, as I am still so well attended in my own chapel. My hearers think I neglect them, and leave the few sheep in the wilderness; so I am in a strait. I have had two or three very pressing invitations to go to a favoured people or two in Sussex, who are without a pastor, namely, at Hailsham and Eastbourne, and I have promised them, God willing, to be with them the last Sunday in this month, and the first in next; and as the Lord seems to bear testimony to my preaching amongst you, I feel inclined, as you invite and wish me to come again amongst you soon, to preach to you at Oakham on the second Sunday in October, viz., 13th; and may it be made manifest that the Lord has ordered my coming to you. The Lord only knows what hidden ones are in the little dark town and county, and He will appoint means to bring His banished ones home.

Philpot preached in a church near me on Sunday, and some who understood the distinction of sounds, heard him extremely well. I think that he will soon leave the Church of England. His church at Stadhampton, where he has preached for five years, is very much crowded. He has refused to send any children to be confirmed, and so I expect the Bishop will interfere.

Two more ministers of the Church of England have lately left in this neighbourhood. I think very poorly of those that continue in it, but I cannot think well of some that leave it. The errors, when strongly represented, can be seen very plainly by the light of nature, but grace is little in operation in the souls of the Lord's people. We live in a dark day, but I think darkness prevailed much about fifty years ago also. I have light enough to see the ignorance and worldliness of even those who pass for good people amongst good people, and very few indeed seem to be enjoying much of the presence and love of the Lord. As for myself, I am "faint yet pursuing," but to be enabled to hold on in the fight against the threefold enemy is a very great mercy. Before I shall ever be of much use to the Lord's family, I must be much more deeply taught in my own soul. It shows me the great darkness of the present day, and a great want of ministers, that the churches keep applying to me; but there is one good reason, that they hear what they hear from me at the same rate as the Corinthians heard Paul's sermons. I cannot see the work going on at Abingdon as I could wish, either in conversion or building up, but seldom do I go to any other place but I return more satisfied with my own hearers.

Old nature is very corrupt, and will continually show itself. I know, from heartfelt experience, that I cannot keep alive my own soul nor raise my affections to heavenly things. The Lord does encourage me now and then, but I generally walk much in darkness and with hardness of heart. I think my heart is much like yours, "carnal, sensual, and devilish." If we ministers were on the wing, those of our hearers who are in the mire would cry out. Very spiritually-minded ministers, enjoying much of the presence of the Lord, would not preach to suit the churches of the present day; nevertheless, if the Lord so favoured them, it might be for the refreshing and reviving of the things that are ready to perish. Whatever obstacles and trials we may meet with, it is the right and sure path. The worldlings and mere professors will have their portion here, but how great a blessing do they receive who are made to differ, and for whom the Lord has prepared eternal mansions of glory ! But we must be a prepared people for our prepared place.

I believe at times you are tried and tempted to give up all hope, and you doubtless wish you had never been so forward in spiritual things. You have put your hand to the plough, and there is no going back from the work. But your troubles respecting religion are scarcely begun ; you are dandled on the knee at present. You will find your enemies more lively and strong the farther you advance in the divine life.

Yours most affectionately,
William Tiptaft.

XXXI

"God will prove that the best of men are but men at the best."

Abingdon, Dec. 5th, 1833.

My dear Brother,—Now you have a chapel I hope God will consecrate it with his presence. The Lord has conferred a great honour upon you and your sisters in using you as instruments in opening a place for the preaching of the everlasting gospel, and many would like to serve you as the heifers were which drew the ark of God. They will say to you, " We know your pride and the naughtiness of your heart, why you have provided a chapel." But you may answer with David, " Was there not a cause ? " I am very glad to hear that the people flock to hear the reading and to join in prayer. I conceive you will be more anxious for preachers than you now appear ; but if the Lord does not send them among you, they will come in vain and for no profit.

I am obliged by your kind invitation, but for the present I do not see my way to Oakham. But if there be a real desire in the souls of the people and any work for me to do, I must come.

I have been very quiet at Abingdon since I left you, and I hope and trust that I see more of the work of the Lord going on amongst us, but it is neither with myself nor people as I could wish. Some of the topping people come occasionally, and there is a great spirit of hearing generally, so that I am slow to leave them. I have preached to my people regularly for several Lord's days now. I scarcely know what to do in leaving them—in going anywhere. I have had a letter from the friends at Colsterworth, and they speak of a farmer being called under my ministry who assembles in a room with them. The work of grace is a great work wherever it has been begun.

There must be trials of soul to break the ties which bind us to the things of time and sense. I am afraid your mind is perplexed and harassed with the affairs of this life. I wish you could be extricated from all worldly cares save your regular calling.

I will not justify —— in disappointing you, but I hope that you will manifest the power of religion in your kindness and forbearance towards him. "Overcome evil with good." "Who maketh thee to differ?" Poverty and a large family have driven even God's children to do what does not become the gospel, and what may you expect when there is no grace? God has wonderfully provided for you and your family, and I have no doubt that He will. But those who have godliness with contentment are as rich as you. In the primitive days of the gospel, how the rich sold their lands and houses and laid the money at the apostles' feet! But we scarcely like to mar our inheritance. You and I have much to learn in the school of Christ before we deserve the name of teachers of others, and no school is more profitable to be taught in than that of disinterestedness. "Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad, and rivers in the streets;" "He that soweth sparingly shall also reap sparingly." Real religion does not consist in outward things; but where genuine religion is, the fruits of righteousness will be made manifest.

You at Oakham as well as we at Abingdon want more of the Spirit's teaching. We need more powerful operations of the Spirit on our souls, and sensible apprehensions of the Lord's great love to us; and we need to die daily. Much may be learnt in the letter, but that soon dies away, and leaves a man powerless in his life and conversation. If the Spirit of God rest upon a man, he will be hated and yet loved; unknown and yet well known; dying and still alive; very weak yet very strong.

I have but very little grace and true knowledge, and I wonder that the Lord should bear testimony to my preaching, and that the people will persevere in coming to hear me. I sometimes enjoy a little of the light of God's countenance, but I soon become dark and barren again.

It is now more than two years since I left the Establishment, and, through mercy, I continue in a measure faithful to the light which the Lord has been pleased to give me. I have learnt more of my own ignorance since that time, and feel as fully convinced that the most vital godliness is to be found amongst those who are called Antinomians. The work of grace is by no means clear and regular apparently to us in the hearts of the Lord's people; and many things seem even inconsistent in those who can speak of the deepest trials of soul, and the greatest revelations, and the sweetest testimonies of peace to their souls.

I believe that God will mar the pride of man. He will have all the glory, and prove that the best of men are but men at the best. Such instances are left on record in God's word, and we may truly say God's thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor God's ways as our ways. If we have the Spirit of Christ, we must have treatment similar to His. The ungodly will hate the godly, and if we do not suffer with Him we shall not reign with Him. You will have your trials and crosses before you will have your crown, and they will not come in the way most suited to your natural wishes. A cross is to be a cross. You will have trials with your chapel, trials with your brethren, and trials with the world; but that monster self will be your worst trial, for he will so often plead your friend. Nevertheless, as the sufferings abound, so also the consolations; and as thy days, so thy strength shall be.

Mrs. Husband is very delicate and poorly from pain in her chest. Husband has licensed his house at Appleford, and preaches there in the evening. Philpot was here yesterday, and slept at Appleford. He is rather better.

May the Lord abundantly bless your meeting together, for Christ's sake.

I remain, my dear Brother,
Yours very affectionately,
W. Tiptaft.

XXXII

"Gold bought in the fire makes the Christian rich."

Abingdon, Dec. 16th, 1833.

My dear Brother,—"Man deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps."

In your last you said, "I trust that you will have a call in this direction, when the alteration is made in the chapel." Now it has so occurred since I wrote to you, that my Wolverhampton friends have made a particular application to me to preach for them the last Lord's day in this month and the first in the next. I have written to say (God willing) I will preach to them on the above-named Lord's days; and thence I purpose, if the Lord will, to proceed to you, and accept your invitation; and as you desire that I should be with you two Lord's days, I am making arrangements here to be with you on Jan. 12th and 19th. I scarcely know how to leave here; nevertheless, I hope that it may be made very manifest that I was to visit you this winter. I shall be glad to find you in a lively state in your souls, manifesting the fruits of the Spirit; and your zeal will doubtless provoke very many.

My chapel being still crowded has excited a great zeal amongst the Church people and they have made a liberal collection to have a third service in the Great Church. They do not like so many straggling down to my chapel, and imbibing such sentiments as cause them to doubt whether all were moved by the Holy Ghost to preach the gospel who stand up in their steeple-house. They intend to commence their lecture in the evening on the first Sunday in the new year. I am speaking the real sentiments of my mind when I say that I wish they had knowledge equal to their zeal.

You will be much tried in your mind respecting your providing a place for the Lord's people to meet in, and will be tempted to fear whether or not you have been actuated by the influence of the Spirit of the Lord. It will be profitable for you to have searchings of heart, for you need self-examination continually, to know whether your eye is single to God's glory. You will find even the children of God are worldly and carnal, and heavenly-mindedness is but little seen and known.

It is a blessed truth that Christ came to justify the ungodly and the children of God know, from heartfelt experience, that they stand amongst those characters, are stripped of every hope, and have no refuge but in their hiding-place, the Lord Jesus, their Rock. Their life is hid with Christ in God. Neither wrath, terrors, judgments, law, nor the devil himself, can ever prevail against the Lion of the tribe of Judah. He has conquered, and, as the great Captain of Salvation, will lead all His blood-bought chosen ones to fight the good fight of faith, and so to conquest and to crowns of glory. I trust and hope that there are a few in Oakham and the neighbourhood that will stand when He appeareth; but they are, like myself, very young and feeble, and need strengthening.

The way to heaven is narrow, and beset with many difficulties, and we, at times, are almost sorry that we ever ventured out, especially when we keep continually meeting with the lions in the way; but nothing so much checks and stops us as vile self. It cleaves to everything on the way, and wants so often to turn us out of the way, and the ear is not deaf to the alluring and enticing invitation of Demas to look into the silver mine. Blessed are they who are only allowed to look in; for, alas! how many glaring professors and speedy travellers to Zion, who have been brave companions on the way for a time, have stopped short at that mine, and never could be seen beyond it. Our hearts are very closely knit with everything that the world loves and admires. Good old David had to say, "My soul cleaveth to the dust;" and so do all God's children say it now, at times, if they know the plague of their own hearts. Neither the terrors of the law, nor the arguments nor persuasions of men, can ever separate a man from the world, and keep him from being a lover of himself. It requires the same power to effect it as made the world. "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." It is through the Spirit that the deeds of the body are mortified.

I do not consider that the churches are very spiritual in the present day, nor will they ever be without various trials from without or within. They need to have their senses well exercised to discern both good and evil. Gold bought in the fire makes the Christian rich. I consider that it is a sign of a very low state of soul, for any one to see the Church in such a low state without mourning and grieving, and having a longing desire to see the Lord's people revive as the corn and grow as the vine. The ministers themselves are very indifferent about the prosperity of

Zion. I believe that they will be revived in their souls before the churches prosper; for "like people, like priest."

O that the Lord would, of His infinite mercy, pour out His Holy Spirit upon all His dear children, so that we might indeed say that the Lord has done great things for us. I am tried in my soul in various ways. The formation of a church here is in consideration, and I feel it a very weighty matter. I do not at all feel myself fit for a pastor to go in and out before them, nor can I conscientiously continue regardless of the Lord's ordinances. I am in a strait. The Lord's people are very odd people to rule, and to keep them even looking kindly towards each other. It can be done by no other power than the Lord's; for "Ye are taught of God to love one another." I shall be very glad to find you growing in faith, and your charity towards each other abounding.

May there be an earnest spirit of prayer, that I may come unto you in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ. I shall be pleased to find, after a time, that the Lord had some hidden ones in dark Oakham, to bring forth and to cause to shine as lights in a wicked world. It is an infant of days with you at present. but the day of small things is not to be despised. It is first the blade, then the ear, and then the full corn in the ear. But grace will manifest itself, ere long, wherever it is.

Nothing is to be compared to real and vital godliness. The least work of grace in the heart is worth a thousand worlds. I hope that you will be more and more zealous for the Lord's cause, and that you will manifest to those around you that neither your time and money are worth mentioning as a sacrifice in the cause of Christ, who made that inestimable sacrifice, not of gold, nor silver, but of His own precious blood, to redeem selfish, carnal, ungodly, and hell-deserving sinners. Moreover, He has bestowed upon them more than we can ever ask or think, glory and honour be to His adorable name!

Yours very affectionately,

W. Tiptaft.

XXXIII

"If the world sees that we will make no sacrifices, they will quickly say, 'What do ye more than others?'"

Abingdon, Feb. 17th, 1834.

My dear Brother,—You now read and pray to the Lord's people. I believe that you are desirous of glorifying God, but you would sooner sacrifice Ishmael than Isaac.

Yesterday I preached here in the morning, at Wallingford in the afternoon and evening, and had a very favourable day in my own soul. Husband baptized four. One was an old woman about 80 years old. He baptized in the mill-dam near his old church. He was low in spirits because I was not there, but the arrangement was entirely through him.

I find my old nature cleaves to money very closely when I part with it. If I had lived in the apostles' days I should have found the sin of Ananias in my heart, if it had not prevailed. Selling all or selling a part is very different. But if the world sees that we are covetous, and will make no sacrifices, they will quickly say, " What do ye more than others ? "

Yours most affectionately,
W. Tiptaft.

P.S.—I expect Warburton here next week. We scarcely know what to do here about forming a church. I found it good for my soul in breaking bread yesterday. I believe God's children are desirous of fulfilling God's will in receiving the Lord's Supper in remembrance of Him.

XXXIV

"Every child of God has a judgment seat set up in his heart."

Abingdon, July 7th, 1834.

My dear Brother,—Many thanks to you for your kind letter; and as I have very lately heard from friend Gadsby, I now write to say when you may expect him. It is his intention to be one night at Uppingham, I imagine from invitation; consequently, he purposes being at Leicester on Monday, August 18th, on Tuesday at Oakham. In answer to this letter, you will let me know whether the above arrangement is agreeable, as he requests that I will inform you, that you may let him know; but if you very soon tell me, I will inform him. He especially wishes me to be at Manchester the whole of September ; therefore, if the Lord will, I will preach at Oakham the last Lord's day in August, if you prefer my coming then in preference to my returning from Manchester, in October, by Oakham. You will be pleased with Gadsby's company. He will be very encouraging, and he will make himself quite at home with you. You will convey him to Uppingham, and the Uppingham friends can take him to Stamford.

I hope you will not raise your expectations too high about Gadsby. You can receive no blessing through him without the Lord's special grace. I hope to hear that the Lord sends him among you for the revival of His work in the souls of the Lord's people.

Last Lord's day week I spoke to a large multitude assembled together to see Husband baptize four members, and upon the whole it was a favourable day. I was enabled to speak plainly on the occasion.

We still talk about baptizing and forming a church here, but there are so few that I can fully receive in heart, and I feel myself so unfit for a pastor. I have at present no want of hearers and I think, at times, that the Lord is surely with us, but I am a very poor, ignorant instrument as a minister. I feel more deeply the burden of the work, and am ready to halt. I have so little grace and power, and at times I question whether I have any. I feel myself so vile, so sinful, so full of unbelief, and at times I can thank God I am not in hell. But the Lord encourages me, at times, both in my own soul and in the ministry ; and then I think that the Lord has really a work for me to do, and that my preaching will not prove altogether in vain.

I have various invitations to preach. Last Wednesday evening I preached in a waggon. The place would not hold the people, and on next Lord's day I am to preach at Wallingford.

If I could be what I would be as a man and a preacher, I should be very different from what I am. I should be more on the mount, I should pray more, and love more, and bring forth more fruit ; but when I would do good, evil is present with me. Sometimes I feel very thankful that I am not left to fall a prey to my lusts, and to the temptations of the devil. I am daily a debtor to sovereign grace. Many, I believe, are waiting for my halting. Through the grace of God, I trust their eyes will fail with waiting.

There is nothing worth living for in this vain world. Vanity is stamped upon all created good, and my desire is to die to the world, and to be alive unto God. Oh! that the Lord Jesus would manifest more of His love to us, that we might triumph in Christ, and that we might speak of His glory and talk of His power. We need continually quickening and helping. We need holding up in all our goings out and comings in.

You are in a conspicuous situation; you have come forward in the Lord's cause. May the Lord manifest His power in you. May you be much more concerned about the Lord blessing your souls in The Factory than about its alterations.

All dealings with the world are of a deadening nature; therefore, whatever unnecessarily brings us into contact with the world should be avoided. We acknowledge the truth of it, and wish it when we are in our right minds. "No man can serve two masters." That great truth is a continual cross to many. "O wretched man that I am!" says the great apostle; and so says every child of God who knows the plague of his own heart. We need stripes, scourges, rods, and afflictions, &c., besides various other crosses to separate us from worldly things. Our souls so very much cleave to the dust.

I hope that the Lord is blessing the church in your house. Sometimes grace seems to work very slightly in your heart as you view each other, but it is according as God deals forth to each. A day of trial may come upon you to prove the work in you all, and to make it more manifest to each other. Grace uplifts the heart with its own gifts, yet when the Lord blesses, the soul rejoices and sings, and is ready to despise the weaklings in the mire and dirt. The soul is in its best state when most humbled. Lowliness of mind and contrition of spirit are the best evidences of the effects of grace wrought in the soul. The promises are nearly all for the humble, the lowly, the broken-hearted, the tempted, the tempest-tossed, the devil-harassed, the afflicted children of God; for the Lord will revive the humble and the contrite. He will give grace to the lowly, and feed the hungry with good things.

Real religion is in the heart. Every child of God has a judgment-seat set up in his heart, and he knows repentance is not the work of a day, but he is continually sinning and repenting, and knows that godly sorrow must come from God alone.

I shall be very glad to have a very long letter from you, giving me a full and particular account of the Lord's dealings with the people of God among you. Please to give my Christian love to them, not forgetting those in your own house. I have been chiefly at home with my own people since I was with you.

I hope you are very liberal to the poor children of God. Open thy hand wide to thy poor brother. You will be no poorer for giving a sovereign or a five-pound note now and then. You only lend it to the Lord; and you are not your own; therefore glorify God in body and in spirit, which are His.

Yours very sincerely and affectionately,
William Tiptaft.

XXXV

"The best religion is bought the dearest,"

Abingdon, April 6th, 1835.

My dear Brother,—I thank you for your kind letter, and, though I have little to communicate worth postage, I imagine that you may be expecting a letter from me in answer.

I am glad to find you tried and harassed in mind. If there were no law in your conscience, there would be no working up of all manner of concupiscence; and if there be no humility, there will be no honour. So you must be abased in your own eyes, and know something of the vileness of your corrupt nature, or you would be slipping into some of the various pits of error, and would not be a witness against the presumptuous free-willers.

May the Lord break down your self-will and free-will, and make you a humble man; for if the dross be taken away from the silver, there cometh forth a vessel for the finer. It is a painful process to pass through the furnace; but the best religion is bought the dearest, and what we get cheap we do not much value.

I can scarcely tell you how I am getting on. Sometimes I get on tolerably well, and at other times I seem to be going backwards. Sometimes I seem to have marks of grace, and of my call to the ministry, and at other times I have none. There is one mark I am scarcely ever without, which is passing through evil report.

When I was travelling from Stamford in February, a gentleman (whom I believe to be a clergyman) on the coach, who had been visiting at Stamford, began to tell me and the others on the coach a long story about Tiptaft. He said he had been preaching at Oakham and in the neighbourhood, and brought several charges against me, such as making merchandise of my hearers, in two or three chapels, and ruining other ministers by drawing away their hearers. I asked him for his authority. He said that he had heard it at Stamford, and that I had a sister married at Stamford to a gentleman of wealth and respectability, and it was true. I thought it was not honest and kind to allow him to proceed without telling him who I was. He then told me he had a friend who knew me when I was curate at Treborough, who had spoken to him in the highest terms of me, and that he could not but regret that one of such eminent qualities should secede from the Church of England. The conversation was rather interesting to our fellow-travellers. I told him that the charges against me were false ; and, though it was often reported that I was making a gain of godliness, I was at present free from the guilt of it. He would probably have told me something that might have been profitable ; but I was not ruffled by what he said, as they were old tales. He was very civil afterwards, and apologised. I gave him, when he left at Huntingdon, Rowland Hill's letter.

This and other reports prove to me that Satan is not idle. I trust that my preaching is not in vain, and that his kingdom is receiving some little damage by me. I feel it more and more a great mercy that I can boldly and conscientiously meet all the charges, and may the Lord in His goodness and mercy hold me up, and then I shall be safe. David says, " Let them curse, but bless Thou " ; and poor Jeremiah said, " I have heard the defaming of many. Report, say they, and we will report it."

Friend Philpot is with me for a day or two. He has left the Church of England, and has resigned his fellowship. His reasons for resigning will be published in a few days. It is a faithful testimony. He could stay in it no longer.

Poor Kay is still with me. His way is still shut up. Philpot says that the more he sees of him the better he likes him.

I dare say you will be much tried about your own soul, and about making the chapel ; you will think that both began in the flesh ; doubts, fears, and anxieties will follow you, and you will think how much better you would get on in every way, if you had made no profession in religion. But you may as well have no religion as that which brings no cross. There is no such path ever mentioned in God's word which leads to glory. Sometimes you will think that you have a great many crosses, and at other times you will think that you have not sufficient to prove that you are really a son.

The Lord's people are led in paths they know not, and they frequently get where Job was when he said, "I am vile," and "I am full of confusion." You will never be sorry you have waded through much miry clay when you are delivered, and you will learn to put a right value upon religion; for if a man is taught of God, his heart will make him speak aright, and pray aright, and will add learning to his lips. He will, by such teaching, be led to discern between good and evil, and to know things that differ.

Whatever true religion a man gets he must buy; and "he that believeth shall not make haste." I seem to get comfort from these words, for I am sure I do not make haste. Hardness of heart, unbelief, uncleanness, pride, self-seeking, covetousness, indifference about the Lord's cause, backwardness to prayer and preaching, with various other evils, make me feel more fit for hell than this earth, and I am glad to get comfort from the thought that Paul had to make a complaint of such evils, when he says that the law worked in him all manner of concupiscence. These evils and abominations do not satisfy my soul that I am right; but I do not envy those, however holy they may be, and however strong their faith is, if the corruptions of their own hearts have never been stirred up; you will find that the genteel Christians generally fall short in such knowledge. But God must be known by His people as a heart-searching and rein-trying God. I question nearly everybody's religion which stands in much joy, peace, and comfort, for faith must be tried. If they are even sincere in thinking that they are blessed with such strong faith, they are only deceived, for in the present day very few can justly say they believe they are pardoned. Most of the Lord's people that I meet with cannot get beyond, "I hope and I trust."

As regards myself, I must confess that my prayers are faint and few. Sometimes I am concerned about my soul, and at other times feel hardened. I find the ministry a great trial to me, as I feel myself so ignorant and unfit for the work. I am driven into corners, and often wonder where the scene will end. O that the Lord would pour down his Holy Spirit on me, and make me more useful, so that I might have a sweet testimony in my soul that he is with me of a truth! I can preach very little about

Jesus Christ, as I know so little of Him—so little of the power of His grace in my own heart. It even seems a mercy of mercies that I continue making a profession of the Lord's blessed name unto this moment. I find the way that I am in is all up hill; but that does not satisfy me that it is the right way. I do not want outward marks, such as sneers and persecutions, but I want internal marks, more and more of the Spirit's work upon my heart, more and more of a spirit of love both to Jesus and His people.

I hope the Lord is blessing you in your meetings. You must not judge altogether of the good done by outward appearances. It is a great blessing that you are not worshipping with the congregation of the dead. I hope that the Lord will keep you, and make you very liberal to the Lord's people. And may you and I be kept, in the midst of all the enemies of the gospel, who are watching for our halting, and would be so glad to say, "Ah, so would we have it."

Yours very sincerely and affectionately,

WM. TIPTAFT.

XXXVI

"God must be known by His people as a heart-searching and rein-trying God."

Abingdon, August 24th, 1835.

My dear Brother,—Through mercy, I continue until this moment professing the name of the Lord Jesus; but not without difficulties, and trials, and temptations, and many fears whether I shall endure unto the end. Sometimes I think it will be well with me, and I shall endure unto the end. I meet with a share of the reproach and contempt cast upon the truth, and I believe God will ever bear testimony to, and defend the doctrines which I preach. But of late many violent opposers of the blessed truths have had the hand of God put forth against them in a conspicuous manner. I heard, last week, that a minister's wife, who heard me preach some time ago in Wilts, was extremely violent against me and the doctrines; and in three or four days after hearing me, while severely condemning me and the truth, she was actually struck dumb, and remains so to this time. "The hand of the Lord shall be known towards His servants, and His indignation towards His enemies." It is awful to see a person so very violent against the distinguishing doctrines of grace. I feel myself altogether unworthy to have the hand of the Lord known towards me ; but may I ever justify Him in maintaining His own blessed gospel.

I am more and more convinced how little I know, and how unfit I am to preach ; and the work of the ministry is a greater trial to me than ever it was. It seems to me, at times, to be almost presumption to stand up in the Lord's name, being so ignorant, knowing so little of myself, and less of God. Hardness of heart, unbelief, and a sense of various inward abominations constrain me to contend for a free-grace gospel, the difficulty of going to heaven, and inability of man in every respect. I cannot think well of Christians who have always had a smooth path. If they have never had the pot boil within so as to be sensible of the scum, they have never valued mercy and the restraining grace of God. I get shut up in such places that I can neither go backwards nor forwards, and my hope of entering heaven sinks into nothing. When in that state, I wish some one would tell me how to exercise faith, and to get a glimpse of hope from the past.

When people talk about their religion without straits, conflicts, and divers and manifold temptations, I think it is theirs, not God's ; for He will prove the religion that He gives to a poor sinner to be genuine. Look out for humbled, broken-down, devil-harassed, and heart-plagued sinners, and make much of them. Such will be low in a low place, and the eye of the Lord will be over them, and He will dwell with such. We are sure to meet with difficulties in the way to heaven. and we may question whether we are in the way without them. If the law works a little in a poor sinner's soul, he will not want ministers to preach any free-will in their sermons. You and I have abominations in our hearts that we are little aware of ; and if we are not brought to feel and confess how bad we are, we shall never know how good God is to us.

You are sure to be tried about your chapel, if any good be done. Though health, strength, and wealth are all Christ's, you will grudge and murmur about spending much in His cause. When your unbelief shows itself, it will condemn you for your foolishness, for having anything to do with religion beyond a mere form to please the world. But when you are in your right mind you will feel thankful that you are counted worthy to be an instrument to promote the Lord's cause, even in the least degree.

You are not to expect great things in yourself or others without great trials, afflictions, and persecutions. You may bless God, if grace enables you, for not giving you up to your vile affections, and thereby making you an awful example unto others. It is a great mercy that we are out of hell. Give my best love to all who love the Lord in sincerity.

Yours most affectionately,

W. Tiptaft.

XXXVII.

"God will cleanse His people from their idols."

Abingdon, Feb. 1st, 1836.

My dear Brother,—I have been hoping for some days to receive a letter from Oakham; but hope deferred makes the heart sick, so I write that I may have an answer.

Through mercy, I arrived safely at Abingdon again, and have been going on much as usual. I find that sin is a powerful enemy within me, and keeps me from preaching perfection in the flesh. I am obliged to make humble confession of my weakness, ignorance, sinfulness and foolishness, and I am sometimes almost without a mark of a child, except it be that I may be numbered among "the discontented." When I shall enjoy better days, I know not; but brighter scenes seem more desirable, if they are not so profitable.

My preaching tries me very much. I feel so unfit for it, and so unworthy of so great a work. I am constrained to think that the Lord is long-suffering that He does not cut me off for my presumption; for I often feel as if I had no reverence for His great name, and no delight to see Him honoured and glorified. But in the midst of all my confusion, blindness, and deadness, I do trust I am not without sensible feelings of having something good in me towards the Lord. Some visible landmarks seem to show themselves for my encouragement, and I have signs and tokens that the Lord has been with me, and will be with me, even unto the end. But I am not satisfied with myself as a Christian, much less as a preacher. I want more powerful proofs and testimonies that God is my Father, that Christ is my Saviour, and the blessed Spirit my Teacher. These mercies seem to be too great, and the knowledge so high that I cannot attain unto it.

I know and feel too much of my corrupt nature to be content with speaking of the Trinity, as many do, in word, and thus call themselves Christians. I am sure nothing will do for a sensible sinner but a knowledge inwrought in the soul by the blessed Spirit of God. All things here below seem opposed, in my view, to the spiritual kingdom in the heart. Pride, lust, selfishness, unbelief, and strong love of self, with the powerful influence of the devil, seem to tread down and destroy everything in the soul which strives for and searches after eternal things. "When I would do good, evil is present with me." So going to heaven is a continual conflict, a daily cross, and a climbing of mountains, which difficulties often make the poor sinner wish himself back in Egypt, that there was no heaven, and that he had never gone forth as a pilgrim. He wonders where the scene will end, and is afraid of that text which says, "He that endures unto the end shall be saved." Encouragement is not given so soon as we think we want it, and we are obliged to say, with one of old, "Is His mercy clean gone for ever?" And "hast Thou forgotten to be gracious?"

Those who are always satisfied with their faith and hope, and who are not shot at by Satan, may despise our poor, low and grovelling religion, creeping and hobbling on as we are obliged to do; but it is written, "The last shall be first, and the first last." "And he that gathered little had no lack." If we are so favoured as to have the least grace, "the dust" of the building is to be "remembered," and the "prayer of the needy shall not alway be forgotten." The Lord will regard the sighing of the prisoners. The afflicted, the tempted, and distressed will pour out their groans and sighs, and they will enter into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth; and "those who are ready to stumble shall be girded with strength."

I am more and more convinced that no religion will do to die by which does not work by power and bring a man to see and feel himself very vile, very ignorant, and very helpless; and if a man is really weighed down and pressed in spirit through inward trials and outward crosses, he will not want to live always, and will not be puffed up by being upon good terms with himself, nor will he find delight and happiness in his worldly plans and ways. "Vanity of vanities," he must at times say, and desire to know Christ as his everything, his all in all. Unbelief and self-love will strive powerfully to make us act upon worldly principles, frequently termed prudence; and they would compel us, if grace did not prevent, to walk in the course of this world, and then, if that were the case, our opinions would be the only proof of our religion. God will cleanse His people from their idols; He will give them those things that they hate, and take from them those things that they love, and hedge up their ways, and confound their worldly schemes and wisdom, until they wonder what He intends to do next.

If we are partakers of God's grace, we are rich indeed, being joint-heirs with Christ; but if we are to reign with Him, we must suffer with Him. There is no other path to heaven but the path of tribulation; and whoever finds no crosses and no trials in his path, "woe is me" if I encourage him in his religion. Experience and the truth of God's word are both against him, and he has neither law nor gospel to endorse his profession. Christians are very scarce who bear genuine marks of having passed through Moses' school to a knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. I sometimes question the religion of people so much as to think true Christians are nearly as scarce as snowballs at Midsummer and roses at Christmas. "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure; the Lord knoweth them that are His." I have reason to condemn my own religion. My heart sinks within me at times, and I am full of fears and doubts whether the Lord is leading me by the right way to a city of habitation. If it were not for some little marks of life, feeling, and love in my soul, I might despair indeed. A religion worth having is not cheaply bought and quickly obtained. There are many ups and downs, and we are not very willing to give up our own righteousness and doings. We daub away with untempered mortar, until we are really ashamed of our work, and confounded at our ignorance, our helplessness, and foolishness; and then we are obliged (no praise to us), from necessity, to receive the least hope or mark of mercy as flowing from sovereign grace.

Friend Kay is much the same. He was pleased with his shirts.* He lives, like many more, in hopes of seeing more independent days; but the Lord orders all things very wisely.

I shall be very glad to hear how you are going on in your meeting together: whether you are encouraged and comforted much in the work. Trials you must and will have; and if things went smooth and easy, you might be sure it is not God's way of carrying on His work. I hope the Lord is blessing you and making you fruitful branches. If grace works in your hearts, it will not work in vain. Flesh goes one way, and grace another, and there must be a war. Do you feel a desire of having less to do with the world ? Prosperity in worldly things will damp the desire of eternal things. God's children are generally poor, for we never hear, scarcely, of much grace in the heart and much gold in the pocket. Have you learnt to your own comfort, in your own experience, that it is more blessed to give than to receive ? Open thine hand wide to thy poor brother, and give liberally.

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* These were sent to him as a present from Oakham.

There are many very poor in this neighbourhood, and some whom I hope well of, and believe to be partakers of grace, contend with great difficulties. I sometimes feel as if I had a mind ; but my pocket is so soon empty, and I generally find where there is the empty pocket there is largeness of heart ; for when a man lays up gold, it is his idol, and he will not part with it. I think there are a very few rich Christians that could lay down their lives for the brethren, whilst they are so slow to lay down their half-crowns and sovereigns. It is a great mercy to be able to make a good use of our money. It is a bad master, but a good servant, particularly when it supplies the pinching wants of the Lord's own dear children. Self is so forward for everything, that the poor and destitute can get but little.

I sometimes think I am negligent in urging those who have plenty of this world's goods to give more liberally to the poor. Example is better than precept ; but it is more contrary to our vile and selfish hearts. Selfishness is so strongly rooted, and is so cherished and watered by the advice and example of others, and by the tradition of our forefathers, that a liberal spirit is sooner checked than encouraged by these words : "Spare thyself." He, however, "that giveth to the poor lendeth unto the Lord ;" but many who profess great love to Christ would rather lend to the covetous "whom God abhorreth," and would rather trust to money in the funds than to God's promises : "All these things shall be added unto you ;" "and no good thing will God withhold from them that walk uprightly." Whatever sins I may be guilty of, I trust I may be kept from hoarding up like a miser, whilst so many have scarcely bread to eat.

If Deborah finds her mind willing to make the soup for the poor better rather than worse,* I shall not be surprised if you make her a handsome present to encourage her. If she makes your heart glad in seeing her very liberal, God has provided for you, and can provide for you. And what a mercy it is to leave money to your children which has not a curse upon it, by having had a close hand towards the poor. I hope that the Lord will make you witnesses for the truth.

Yours very affectionately,
Wm. Tiptaft.

XXXVIII

"The Lord's people must and shall know that their strength is in God."

Abingdon, April 15th, 1836.

My dear Brother,—Whatever charge they may bring against me, they cannot say that I am guilty of heaping up riches, whilst God's children are in such painful and trying straits.

I find myself a very ignorant, sinful creature to be a preacher of the gospel; and I wonder that God blesses me in any way. I should like to be more holy and heavenly-minded, and to enjoy more of the Lord's presence and love; but instead, I have to feel the bitter evils of my heart, and to question what right I have to make a profession of religion in any way whatever. I learn that there is no real hope, but in God's mercy. I am sure that I deserve hell. I have sinned; I am unclean; I am vile. I need the Lord's helping hand, and His delivering goodness. I feel no union with those who are not exercised with the evil workings of their hearts, and feel their helpless state. The Lord's people must and shall know that their strength is in God. I want to know more of the fulness of the gospel, and of the riches of God's grace realised in my soul, so that I might speak more clearly of what the Lord has done for me. I do not like to be obliged to take so low a ground, and to find so many oppositions within to everything that is good. I do not much expect to be quiet and at ease here long. Real religion will surely be opposed and appear very scarce, so that we shall be disappointed if we expect to see much in ourselves, or in others. It is only an "earnest" that the most gracious will ever have in this time-state; and whatever sweet and blessed testimonies any one may have, there will surely be ballast.

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* Mrs. Keal always made a large copperful of excellent soup—not skillagalee—once a week for the poor during the winter months.

I hope the Lord will graciously appear and manifest Himself in your prayer-meetings, so that you may be encouraged to go on; for you will feel so dead, backward, and careless that you will need either a stripe or a smile to keep you moving. But remember, "he that believeth shall not make haste."

All is vanity here below and vexation of spirit; everything earthly is full of dissatisfaction; but we have a nature that cleaves to the dust; our hearts especially cleave to fine dust, because it is the representative of all things; and we have hearts like those whose "idols are silver and gold." We like to be laden with thick clay rather than be freed from such a burden; and at times we feel it no favour to have opportunities of doing good, even to the Lord's children. We cannot trust God. We are very much like to those who have no religion. I wish that the Lord would make me esteem all things but dung and dross compared to the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus. It is one thing to preach, another to practise. Grace must make us to differ, for we have the same evil hearts as the rest of the world. What a mercy it is to be enabled to say, "By the grace of God I am what I am!"

Yours very affectionately,

Wm. Tiptaft.

XXXIX

"Pride and selfishness are nearly allied."

Abingdon, April 28th, 1837.

My dear Brother,—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your kind letter, with thanks, together with its contents.

You may, perhaps, not be expecting another application for money before I visit Oakham; but I have so many opportunities of assisting in real distress, without even seeking objects of great poverty, that I soon find my purse empty. I trust that you do not suppose I spend much of my money in luxuries and ornaments, and for the gratification of the flesh; nor am I speculating in any manner. It is a great mercy when our consciences are made tender in such things. If we are enabled to dispose of any of our riches for the real benefit of the needy, we prevent the temptation of falling into the snare of spending the money on our fancies and humours. Distrust and unbelief keep the purse-strings tight; but I feel satisfied, in my right mind, that a little money well bestowed is better than a great deal well laid up. But we have to steer against a tide of selfishness in our own hearts, and to climb over heaps of examples and maxims of unbelievers, if we go along in the path of liberality, which may be considered such in the light of God's word. With respect to liberality, Paul says, "See that ye abound in this grace also." And what does the apostle mean by the word "abound"? We have such self-seeking hearts that we should be slow to believe the full extent of the expression, but should readily consent for Mr. Worldly Prudence to put his construction on it.

Whilst we are in these tabernacles of clay our souls will cleave to the dust; and "Spare thyself" is written so deeply on our hearts that we need provoking by example and exhortation to consider those that are in adversity as being also in the body. "When we would do good, evil is present with us." Nevertheless, where there is a living faith accompanied with this world's goods, the hungry and naked, and especially the Lord's family, will meet with something better than the mere words, "Be ye fed, and be ye clothed;" although much may be done in this way by mere natural people, and even to the condemnation of those who profess to love the Lord Christ.

Various sins will ever try us whilst in the body; and it is a mercy when we feel them, and groan under their weight. We are ready to excuse in others the sins we are most inclined to indulge in, in order to justify ourselves, when we can speak very severely against other sins which we think ourselves more free from. Pride and selfishness are nearly allied.

This you will consider a kind of preface to asking you to be so kind as to send me a ten pound note on Monday next. I am aware that I shall find myself very much in arrears; but it has been a long winter, and I am glad to say that I do not regret what is disposed of to the benefit of the poor and needy, for I am convinced that an empty purse with a large heart is a thousand times better than a full purse with a small heart; and may the Lord teach me ever to value the former, for it has even the greatest blessing in this life.

I shall be glad to hear how you are going on in the ways of God Darkness and deadness are more known than the light of life. I get on much as usual, and wonder how it is at times I get on at all; for I have much evil and corruption to contend with, and my mind is frequently very much exercised and tried. O that the Lord would bless me!

I am full of fears about eternal things very frequently. I scarcely know how the scene will end, my unbelief and inward wickedness testify so much against me. May the Lord keep us. The work of the ministry is very trying. Without trials and exercises of mind we are very dead and unprofitable, yet we want to go to heaven without tribulation; but it is impossible.

Yours very affectionately,

Wm. Tiptaft.

XL

"All things are very puzzling, and no one more than myself to myself; for I am a mystery indeed."

Abingdon, Aug. 4th, 1837.

My dear Brother,—"Like people, like priest." Every one wants to be encouraged either in a false or true religion. Some like to be built up in empty notions, and others to have their hearts well searched, and their reins tried, that they may have the testimony in their conscience that they are true men; but the halt, and the lame, and afflicted will meet with the only true encouragement. The great question is, Are we in the right way? Is life communicated to our souls? What is all our preaching, reading, praying, and professing, if we have not the root of the matter in us? I believe every true-born soul will find that he will be tried, as long as he is in this tabernacle of sinful dust, whether he can be right, with so much pride, lust, and worldliness, &c. &c. Satan, the world, and the flesh make such inroads upon his soul, at times, as to make him say that he feels destitute of every mark of a gracious character.

O! how dreary is the prospect of eternity when we long after nothing but what the world affords—when we have a heart ready for everything but prayer, self-denial, and what is God-glorifying! I used to find and think religion very different. And if I had not had the experience of some who seem always inclined to God and goodness, I should stumble when I considered their state, and should say, "Surely the Lord is with them alone"; but having had my religion sifted in sharp trials of mind, and heart-stirring seasons, I am confident that no religion is rightly measured if the opposition to it is not gauged also ; that is, we are not to consider what wonderful conquests the new man has gained, if we do not hear a clear account of the power, might, and strength of his enemies in the old man. We must learn our religion in warfare, temptations, and fiery trials, which will surely attend every quickened soul. There must be a reality in a man's religion.

Where there is life, there will be fearing, sinning, loving, hating, falling, confessing, doubting, hoping, mourning, rejoicing, and various ups and downs, ins and outs, in a very mysterious manner wrought in the soul. I can meet with but little vital godliness. Very few seem to have any powerful operations of grace upon the heart ; and those few who can speak of the Lord's dealings seem very much like professors, with a name to live. The Lord evidently does not bestow much of His heavenly blessings on elect souls here below, so that they are reminded that they are to have only an earnest in this life. All things are very puzzling, and no one more than myself to myself ; for I am a mystery indeed. I feel sensible, at times, of the Lord's goodness and mercy, that I am what I am ; that I have any hope, faith, and love is a mercy indeed. And I am sure that the Lord must keep and preserve every tempted sinner ; for all who know their inbred corruptions will acknowledge that the Lord is very merciful, in that He has not cut them off as vile cumberers of the ground.

As long as we live here we shall find that our hearts again and again cleave to the dust. All things, however, are very uncertain and unsatisfactory ; and it is a great mercy when we can use the world as strangers and pilgrims. I am continually finding myself very dead and cold in spiritual things ; but, through mercy, I continue. But, to my encouragement, I hear that the Lord blesses His word by me, and still gives me seals to my ministry. I am so hated, despised, and cursed that the Lord does favour me for their reproaches and curses ; but it is a bad sign when a minister has the smiles of worldly professors.

I hope that grace is manifested in you and the Oakham friends, to draw down reproach and contempt. I hope, also, that the Lord has blessed your wife in all her exercises of mind.

How much we need wisdom to guide and direct us in all things ! Yours most affectionately and sincerely,

W. Tiptaft.

XLI

"What is this world, and all things in it, if a man has not God for his friend?"

Abingdon, March 2nd, 1838.

My dear Brother,—I feel very dead, sinful, and unfit for a pulpit; and it seems a great mercy indeed that my preaching does not altogether fall to the ground. I know not, at times, what use it is my preaching; but the Lord can bless by whom He will bless; and if His presence and power are with me, all mine enemies within and without cannot prevent good being done in the name of the holy child Jesus. It is the Lord's blessing I want, both in and out of the pulpit; for what is this world, and all things in it, if a man has not God for his friend? All things around us remind us that we are nothing better than grass, and are like a fleeting shadow; and if we are void of grace, awful is our state, whether we feel it so or not. But we find that the Lord must make us, of His goodness, view things in their true colours; and if He favours us with a few breathings after the heavenly manna, it stops us earnestly seeking the bread that perisheth.

The world is a great enemy; it contains so many snares and baits so suitable to our carnal appetite. We are surrounded with everything that is trying to fasten our hearts here below; and if we were to have no crosses, and no enjoyment and comfort in spiritual things, we should be endeavouring, still more than we are, to find our happiness in earthly things. A tender conscience and godly fear in the heart are great mercies; and if the Lord does bless our souls with a sense of His pardoning love, it is a wonderful favour. For we know our vileness sufficiently to be sure that there is no hope for us but through His rich, unmerited love and mercy. It is a very narrow path, and the Lord must guide and direct us in it.

I hope you have had a second collection for coals. I am glad you set an example in being liberal to the poor. If you stand by the poor, God will stand by you.

Yours very affectionately and sincerely,

W. Tiptaft.

XLII

"Some mocked, and others desired to hear me again."

Abingdon, March 29th, 1838.

My dear Brother,—I preached at Worcester on the 9th on my way to Wolverhampton; and as I found it a fine large city full of ministers, and darkness, I made a few plain remarks that seemed to stir up some of the people in favour of me and some against me. Some having heard me satisfactorily, and being very anxious for me to preach again, I consented to preach again on my return, which I did on the 26th. I understand that one minister who heard me the first time was made so ill with my sermon that he had to be in bed for three days. Some mocked, and others desired to hear me again.

Yours very affectionately,
WM. TIPTAFT.

XLIII

"If we could get on without God, we should not seek Him."

Abingdon, April 18th, 1838.

My dear Brother,—I was glad to receive the kind letter which you and your better half sent me: and I wish you would write more upon spiritual things; but we find that our hearts cleave so close to the dust that we cannot enter with any life and power into heavenly subjects. It seems a great mercy that we do not deny them, for hope will spring up, in the midst of all our halting and hobbling, that we are amongst the little ones; for the Lord doth bless the small as well as the great.

I am often led to wonder how I ever have got on to this time, and particularly in the ministry; but all past mercies, favours, and encouragements do not make me believe, when I am in a dark state, that I shall continue. Last Friday evening the Lord seemed to be with me, and the friends here expressed themselves to have been favoured in hearing. I find that nothing but true religion will satisfy me, although my mind seems inclined to everything else, and all manner of deadness and evil possess me, in such a way that I cannot trace the work of grace in my heart. I sometimes think that I shall never be lively in my soul without a hot furnace, which I dread. Nevertheless, anything in my right mind seems better than carnality and sensuality. But it will ever be :

"Uneasy when I feel my load,
Uneasy when I feel it not."

I am afraid of having my heart "hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." The world in such various ways is our enemy, that we have more to fear from smiles than frowns ; for when the flesh prospers there will be but little watching, praying, seeking, crying, groaning, and talking even about the sufferings of Jesus. It seems to me much harder work to continue than to begin ; but the church in all ages has been worn down with harassments and perplexities, or the promises would never have been so numerous for the faint and weary. That religion which brings no difficulties will not lead to any cry for help, and if we could get on without God, we should not seek Him.

Free-will, self-sufficiency, and independence, are three strongholds in our hearts, and they only fall before the winds of adversity and soul-trials, which make us to know that Christ is a refuge from the storm and tempest which arise, again and again, in every quickened soul. I get exercised in such various ways. I am sometimes in such places, in which I wish to act right, and yet I do not know what to do. Things may be more smooth for me after a while, for I am not insensible to sinking daily, and at times I seem not to have a grain of faith or strength, and could not trust God for a groat. If the Bible be true, the only good investment is giving money to the poor. That is safe ; it is money put out on the best security, as being lent to the Lord ; and what a good thing it is to make a good use of money, whilst so many spend nearly all they have on their humours, fancies, and lusts. I believe we all love the world more than we think ; and "Spare thyself" is written very deeply in our hearts. I think we love the poor children of God less than we think ; for deeds, not words, come closest to the heart, and it is easier to preach than to practise.

The matter of the greatest importance is the spending and distributing of money. An ungodly man may have much, but he cannot consider the cause of the poor, if the Lord does not bless him with the mind to do so. So an ungodly man's money is either spent on his lust, or brings him under a curse : "Woe be to him that is laden with thick clay." What an awful thing it is to have the curse of a covetous heart ! "The love of money is the root of all evil," and sticks to one's heart like the flesh to the skin, and if any one at all despises money, the devil and the world are in such a passion with him that they are ready to knock him on the head or throw him into the fire, and will withal abuse him for a fool, or a madman.

Yours very sincerely and affectionately,

Wm. Tiptaft.

XLIV

"*Gratitude must come from Heaven.*"

Abingdon, June 8th, 1838.

My dear Brother,—Through mercy I arrived here safely from Brighton, and felt myself better for two or three weeks after illness; but on the 1st of this month, I was seized again with colic, but not so painful as at Brighton. Nevertheless, I have not been out of doors since, except for a short walk this morning. I find this sickness profitable to my soul. It has, I trust, meekened and humbled my spirit, and I have been brought down to lie passive in the Lord's hands. I deserve many such, and much more severe, chastisements for my daily sins and iniquities; and it is through mercy that I am spared to write to you. I have been well attended since I returned from Brighton, and the friends profess to have heard me well. I feel this sickness as a rod that I needed. If we escaped such trials, we should wander farther from God after idols and the vain delights of our wicked hearts. This sickness has made me feel and think more of poor people who cannot get comforts and even necessaries in their daily ailments, whilst I have abundance. But gratitude must come from heaven.

The mayor and some of the leading people of Abingdon have applied to me to-day to give them something towards making a feast on the Coronation day. I told them that such feasts led to drunkenness, &c., and I could not conscientiously give them anything towards it, for I considered them amongst the "revellings"; but if they would establish a sick fund, or benefit the poor in any other way, I would contribute. The mayor is a dissenter, and there were several dissenters with him; but they did not know that "Fear God" stands before "Honour the Queen." It will be a very great day of wickedness in England. My opinions seem to differ from other people's, and they cannot make out what kind of man I am.

Yours very affectionately and sincerely,

WM. TIPTAFT.

XLV

"The more I try to rise, the more I sink."

Abingdon, July 18th, 1838.

My dear Brother,—I feel myself a very poor preacher. The work tries my mind and body; and the last two Lord's days, when I said, after the morning sermon, that Mr. Kay would preach the other time, I felt as a horse would, that had his harness taken off after a journey. I find that religion is uphill work; and the more I try to rise, the more I sink. I scarcely know how to make my religion out. I am not satisfied with those who get on so well and so fast, and yet any religion appears better than mine. How trying it is to preach to people alive in their souls, whilst so dead and carnal myself. Well might Paul say to the Corinthians, "So then death worketh in us, but life in you." "Faint, yet pursuing," is an experience not to be despised in the present day, for nearly all are zealous with false fire, and those who seem to have any real religion are dead and carnal.

Yours affectionately and sincerely,

WM. TIPTAFT.

XLVI

"Ministers must be searched themselves before they can search others."

Abingdon, Aug. 19th, 1839.

My dear Brother,—Through mercy, I arrived safely here on Wednesday evening, the 7th inst. I had, upon the whole, a favourable journey, and felt myself but little fatigued by it. I preached once on Lord's day, the 11th. Very many came to hear; so also yesterday; and some professed to hear with much profit. It has been reported several times, far and wide, that I was dead; and also that during my absence I have been confined in a madhouse. Some seemed pleased to see me again;

but many, who had hoped never to see such a troubler of Israel in these parts any more, are disappointed.

We live in times which need a searching ministry; but ministers must be searched themselves, before they can search others. Searching work is trying work, for it takes away false confidence, and keeps a man from boasting of an untried faith. It makes hypocrites manifest, and separates the poor, tried, and humble souls from the mere professors with a name to live whilst dead. But the work is in the Lord's hands, and if He do not cause the north wind to awake and the south wind to blow, ministers will labour in vain. He has, however, promised that "His word shall not return to Him void, but that it shall accomplish that which He pleases, and shall prosper in the thing whereto He sends it."

How much preparation of heart is needed to receive the word! What trials, afflictions, and sorrows are required to separate us from the world; and very seldom is it that afflictions are without profit to God's people. How hard, carnal, and selfish does a man become who has nothing to soften him! We need daily crosses and daily trials to keep us in any way alive to eternal things, and to maintain a spirit of prayer and watchfulness.

I trust I can say that my sickness has proved profitable to me; but I am a very dull scholar in Christ's school, and need line upon line and precept upon precept. I have to lament a heart full of wickedness, vanity, and folly; and I feel a strong inclination to avoid every cross; but I am sure, nevertheless, that crosses are daily needful. How we cleave to the world; what pride, vanity, flesh-pleasing, and worldly conformity are manifest in us, especially to those who are spiritually minded, and can discern our state.

Yours affectionately and sincerely,
WM. TIPTAFT.

XLVII

"He shall be blessed that hath a bountiful eye."

Abingdon, Nov. 13th, 1839.

My dear Brother,—Since I wrote to friend P., I have not suffered from any further attacks; and, through mercy, I may say that I have but little pain, and take my walks as usual. I find the exertion of preaching earnestly a little trying; so I still continue to speak but once on a Lord's day.

J. Kay was absent nearly ten weeks, and I spent the time very quietly, and, I trust, not altogether unprofitably; for I was favoured with an inclination to read the word of God. I find it good to lead a retired life, if it be not pleasant to the flesh.

How we find that there are two principles within us continually at war, and how they ever wrestle for mastery! But whatever suits and pleases the flesh will surely make the soul lean, and bring on deadness and barrenness. The more we taste of the pleasures of sin the more we get blinded and intoxicated by them, and the more anxious to enjoy them in this time-state, whether we go to heaven or not. Right hands and right eyes are dear to us, and self-denial is a continual cross. When we are tried, tempted, and harassed, we want ease and comfort. Yet we daily learn that without ballast we should not sail in any way safely on the seas of temptation. We need chastisements, rods, and crosses, to bring us to a throne of grace; and we need a daily sense of our vileness and our sins to constrain us to fly to the only true refuge for poor helpless sinners, who is a Friend in need and a Brother born for adversity. But I find that my unbelief would strike at the root of all my hopes, so that I scarcely know what to make of my religion, and think it will be a wonderful mercy if I ever enter into that rest which remaineth for the people of God. Very often, through the various exercises of my soul, my religion is obliged to go into a very small compass, and I am compelled to confess to my hearers what straits I get into. But the more confounded I become in my soul-exercises, the better they seem to bear with me, and to hear me, and tell me they find that my sickness is made profitable to them. And yet I am often tried what right I have to be in a pulpit.

The more, however, I am tried about my own evidences, the more I am tried about the evidences of other people, and the more convinced I am that very many are deceived who are calling themselves experimental Calvinists. Sin, in one way or other, reigns and rules in the heart, and is but little opposed, except, at times, by a little honesty of conscience. Grace will reign in the called elect, although sin may break out and struggle for victory, and make the poor sinner feel that he is a hell-deserving wretch; and, at times, the tempted saint feels the vilest and unworthiest of all around him.

I imagine that the poor old people never liked your soup better than they do this year, as provisions are so dear. "He shall be blessed that hath a bountiful eye." What you give to the poor you cannot spend upon your lusts; and although flesh cleaves very fast to the thick clay, in your right mind you will never be sorry that you have refreshed the bowels of the poor. What you give to the poor you lend to the Lord; and if that be not a good investment, there never was a good one. But I dare say you find that you have a vile, sinful, wretched mind, craving after other sorts of investments. It is well if you feel it and groan on account of it. If none are to go to heaven but those who are free from covetousness, few indeed will be saved. Nevertheless, it stands amongst the black marks of the dead in sin. What a hard sin it is to pray against with the heart, whilst there are a dozen speculating plans in the head.

It is a mercy to be made sensible of our besetting sins and lusts, that we may feel our need of the atoning blood of Christ, and to be fully satisfied that if we depend upon anything short of the blood and righteousness of Christ we must perish eternally, for all other hopes are cut off. Such a sense of sin and vileness cuts up Arminianism by the roots, and prepares us to hear the gospel, and to know that it brings glad tidings to poor, lost, and helpless sinners.

Yours very affectionately,
Wm. Tiptaft.

XLVIII

"Oh! how we need daily renewing and strengthening."

Abingdon, Feb. 5th, 1840.

My dear Brother,—I hope and trust I am rather better than when I last wrote. I find that my walks are beneficial to my health, and I now generally take two or three daily, according to your opinion and advice. I scarcely ever take anything to drink except tea, and water; and I think very little good is done by fermented liquors, although some so strongly recommend me to take them in moderation.

We live in a day of great profession; but I believe there are very few true living souls, and even in those who have life it is scarcely manifested. Nearly all the quickened children of God feel this and mourn over it, more or less. We may wish for a revival, and great spiritual blessings; but great trials and troubles would come therewith, for grace must be tried. Our flesh shrinks from the least cross, and we do not like to lose a little finger, much less a right eye, or a right hand. The flesh will be consulted, or it will rage and storm, and present such mountains in the path to heaven as will make the poor child of God tremble. Carnal security, fleshly gratifications, the friendship of the world, and a smooth path will appear so very desirable, that if we are not led to buy a little faith tried in the fire, so that we might have a glimmering view of the King in His beauty and of the land afar off, we should feel determined to go along By-path meadow, let the consequences be what they might. We should become deserters of Christ's banner, and resolve never to fight valiantly, endure hardness, or suffer any difficulties for the elect's sake, or in the Lord's cause.

Oh! how we need daily renewing and strengthening to enable us to take up the cross, and to contend against the sins that so easily beset us! for we have to say with David, "Our souls cleave to the dust; quicken Thou us, according to Thy word."

I shall be glad to hear how you are going on, whether you see more the sin of grasping after an empty shadow, which promises much and performs nothing, and worse than nothing, for it causes vexation of spirit. I shall rejoice if the Lord draws up your mind more to heavenly things, so that you may be kept from minding earthly things in that way which caused Paul to weep. I wish I had more of that blessed concern, which Paul manifested, respecting the godly and upright walk of the children of God. Yours affectionately and sincerely,

W. TIPTAFT.

XLIX *

"Is it real, Lord? Is it real?"

Abingdon, January 30th, 1843.

My dear Sister,—I was glad to hear that you are about to follow the Lord Jesus Christ through the ordinance of believer's baptism. May your soul be much blest in it. Many find it only a shell; but I believe some are so favoured as to find a kernel with the shell, in the Lord's presence being manifested on the occasion. Whoever may slight and despite it, we have on record how blessedly the Trinity bore testimony to it, when Jesus Christ was baptized (Matt. iii. 16, 17). "Whosoever shall do the will of God, shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God." I dare say you are anxious to know the proceedings here yesterday respecting it. There was a very large concourse of people both times, and many children of God scattered through this neighbourhood were gathered together, distant and near. There were many from mere curiosity, and many could not get even standing room, particularly in the afternoon. I went through a regular service, and then baptized seven women and five men, and after the afternoon service I baptized six women and five men. It seems a great number to be baptized in one day by a minister called so narrow-minded.

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* This letter is here given nearly in full, as published in the *Gospel Standard* for March 1843, Vol. IX., p. 79.

This, however, is the first time of baptizing with us, and it is near fourteen years since I came into this neighbourhood, and more than eleven years since I left the Church of England. In the morning I felt rather shut up in speaking, but in the afternoon I was blest with a little power and liberty, and I trust and believe that the Lord was with us, and several, I understand, found it good to be there. What a different feeling I had in going down from the pulpit to baptize those of whom I had a good hope that they were partakers of grace, according to the mode so clearly stated in the word of God, from what I used to experience when I had to descend from the pulpit in the Church of England to sprinkle infants, and to give a flat contradiction to what I stated in the pulpit respecting regeneration, etc., at the same time encouraging the blind and ignorant godfathers and godmothers in their sin and mocking of God, who came forward so boldly and carelessly to make such awful vows and promises. I am satisfied many things may be bought too dear, even gold, but one thing cannot, which is a good conscience.

I have now something to relate, in which, I trust, you and the other friends at Oakham will feel interested, and will be glad to hear; and may the Lord make it a blessing, and may He have all the praise! It is a new strain for me to begin with: "My heart is inditing a good matter; I speak of the things which I have made touching the King; my tongue is the pen of a ready writer."

After talking over the proceedings of the day with four friends, I retired (on Lord's day evening) to bed in a comfortable state of mind, feeling thankful that the Lord had brought me through a trying day, concerning which I had been much exercised, and trusting the Lord had blest the word to some that day through such a worm as I felt myself to be, as well as owning His own ordinance, to which we had been attending. When I knelt down to offer up a few words by the bedside, I felt my soul drawn out to God, and humbled low before Him with a sense of my sins ; but as soon as I was in bed I began to feel a melting of heart, and a sweet sense of God's love to my soul, which immediately made my tears flow ; and the Lord sweetly began to apply precious promises to my soul with unction and power, and to such an extent as I have never been blest with before. In fact I have never experienced any such blessed manifestation and sweet deliverance, though I have been blessed at different times that I can mention ; but they were far short of this sweet blessing to my soul ; and the savour of it sweetly abides with me still, but I am afraid of losing it, or of being robbed of it.

When the promises began to flow into my soul, these words came with as great power, and as often as any : " Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust ; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs " ; and again and again : " I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins : return unto Me ; for I have redeemed thee " ; " I will honour them that honour Me " ; " He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me : and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him." I did sweetly experience this manifestation of love to my soul ; and I said to the blessed Lord, " Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth," " for His mouth is most sweet." The promises flowed into my soul, and my tears flowed so fast that I soon began to water my couch with tears of joy and not of sorrow. I lay till between twelve and one o'clock in this blessed state, and then fell asleep, for about two hours, and awoke in a delightful frame, the Lord blessing my soul again, till I had to restrain myself from crying aloud. I did not go to sleep again, but lay awake, blessing and praising God for His goodness and mercy to my soul, with debasing views of myself, and with exalted views of the blessed Jesus, having communion and fellowship with Him in His agony and sufferings. But during my soul-enjoyment I kept saying at times, " Is it real, Lord ? Is it real, Lord ? " I wanted to know whether it was real. I asked myself whether I was willing to die, and I felt I was ; and if it were the Lord's will, I was willing to die without telling anyone of His great goodness to my soul ; for the Lord's will was my will. I asked myself whether I would rather have a large bag of gold or this blessing, and I felt a large bag of gold was no more to me than a large bag of pebbles, compared to the Lord's rich blessing. These words came to my mind sweetly again and again :

"Now will I tell to sinners round
What a dear Saviour I have found."

And Hart's hymn :

"Blest Spirit of truth, eternal God," &c.,

was sweet to my soul.

I went up and told J. K. early in the morning, and could not refrain from crying, and could scarcely shave myself through shedding tears so fast. I shed more tears last night than I have shed for years, for my tears do not flow so easily as many people's do. These words came with power: "Sing, O ye heavens ; for the Lord hath done it," &c. ; and also : "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow ; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." This has been to my soul "a feast of fat things, of fat things full of marrow, and of wines on the lees well refined" ; for "the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie : though it tarry wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry."

You, as well as others, know I have had to wait, and have been much tried, because the Lord has not blest me more with His presence and manifestations of His love, though He has given me a few sips by the way, both in preaching and at a throne of grace, and in times of need and temptation. But I have known to my sorrow what it is to sit in the dust, almost without hope whether the Lord would ever put a new song in my mouth. These words were brought again and again : "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name ; bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits : who forgiveth all thine iniquities ; who healeth all thy diseases ; who redeemeth thy life from destruction ; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies." I have gone on in the ministry ready to halt, with sorrow before me, with my soul much discouraged because of the way ; and had not the Lord given me seals to my ministry and testimonies now and then to my soul, surely I must have fainted by the way. If the blessing had come twelve hours sooner, some one else must have preached and baptized, for I could have done neither, through blessing, praising, and crying for joy. Very many of my hearers would have said, it was not enthusiasm in the bud but in the flower, for they are strangers to such feelings. "The heart knoweth his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy." And how clearly did I see David's wisdom in saying, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul." David well knew, that if they did not know a "secret" in religion, they would not be able to understand a work of grace upon the soul. I have been long kept upon short commons, and I have had great murmurings and rebellion respecting it, and now the Lord is pleased to lead my soul into green pastures; but how long I am to be favoured, I know not, but this I know, I feel grateful for what the Lord has granted me, and I love Him, and can bless His holy name. "O that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!"

I have been led to know my vileness, and to feel much of the depravity of my heart, so as to be sensibly a poor, lost, ruined sinner. Sometimes I have envied the brute creation, and at times I have thought God would strike me dead, being sensible of so much sin in my heart. I felt sure I had but little grace, if I had any at all; and my mind has been much tried respecting the formation of a church here, seeing it a grievous thing that the ordinances of God's house should be slighted and neglected year after year by those who, I believe, were the proper persons to attend to them. I could, therefore, see the need of church order and government much better than I could see in any way my fitness to be a pastor. So I was in great straits, and looked forward to the ordinance next Lord's day with much exercise and trial of mind, having to administer it in my darkness of soul, and knowing also that there is such a thing as eating and drinking unworthily, and that such "eat and drink damnation (or condemnation) to themselves, not discerning the Lord's body."

On Friday evening I was with two friends who were speaking of the Lord's manifestations to their souls; but I was dumb, and could say nothing, and felt as if I could not possibly stand in the position I was placed in, being so dark, shut up, and tried.

On Saturday, too, I felt much darkness and trial of mind, but I little thought that God's great goodness and mercy were so soon to be manifested to my soul. I have had sips, but now my cup is full, and even runneth over. In the days of adversity I have considered how the scene would end, but now in the day of prosperity my soul is joyful. "I will be glad and rejoice in Thy mercy, for Thou hast considered my trouble; Thou hast known my soul in adversities, and hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy; Thou hast set my feet in a large room." "The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow with it." The Lord continues to bless my soul with His love, and Christ is precious; and I am sure the Lord's spiritual blessings to my soul do not lead to worldliness and licentiousness, but to deadness to the world and to separation in spirit from it. Real faith works by love, and Christ is truly precious, and there is no true victory over the world but through this blessed experience, known and felt in the soul; and love to Jesus is accompanied with love to the brethren, and with earnest and sincere prayers for the children of God. "They shall prosper that love Zion." Before this blessing I looked forward to the ordinance of the Lord's Supper as a man would who had a great payment to make, and had not wherewith to pay; he wishes that there was no such engagement, or that the time was rather distant; and now I can look upon it as the man would upon the payment, if any one had given him all or more than all the money.

Tuesday Morning.—The Lord's goodness still follows me, but this night was not like the previous; that will be a night to be much remembered by me. I have had these words brought to my mind very sweetly, "Thou art fairer than the children of men; grace is poured into thy lips, therefore God hath blessed thee for ever."

I never went out of doors yesterday, but J. K. was amongst the friends, and I am glad to say that he brought in good tidings, for he had heard that the ordinance of baptism was much blessed on Lord's day; and I hope the Lord's blessing may specially rest upon the friends at Oakham on the 19th. What a little cross it is to bear, for those who have any sense of the crosses, sufferings, and afflictions and agonies that the Lord Jesus Christ, who was harmless, had to endure for the vilest and basest sinners! I believe many are not tried so much about the cross of it, as they are about their fitness to be baptized. It has been a profitable time for the Lord's people here during the formation of the Church, through having to give in their experience, and the hearing of the experience of others has revived their souls.

Give my love to all inquiring friends, and I believe some will be glad to hear that the Lord has visited my soul with blessed promises and testimonies of His love.

Yours affectionately,
W. TIPTAFT.

L

"There are no blessings like spiritual blessings."

Abingdon, April 20th, 1847.

My dear Deborah,— * * * You have lived long enough to see that a Christian is not to be long without trials and troubles, much less a minister. If a minister have a conscience worth having, he is sure to have trouble; and if he have not a conscience worth having, he had better be a shoeblack. There are no blessings like spiritual blessings; but how little do we crave them, and how little do we value them, particularly at times. So deeply rooted is unbelief in us, and the world in various ways so opposed to vital godliness, the heart is deceitful and so wicked, that we need rods and fires as well as smiles and sweet testimonies of His love, to make us in any way alive and fruitful unto God. I trust I may say that the Lord blesses my soul at times; but I do not enjoy that peace and love I wish, and have enjoyed in times past.

Your affectionate Brother,
W. TIPTAFT.

LI

TO A BROTHER MINISTER.

Abingdon, December 13, 1845.

My dear Friend,—I like to receive letters, but I do not like writing the answers. However, we shall find through life one thing must be set over against another; there is no separating the bitters and sweets, the joys and the sorrows, and the sweetest pleasures and severest pains. All things are to work together for good for those called by grace, and surely trials, afflictions and chastisements will be experienced by the child of God, as well as the Love, Mercy and Goodness of God, and all proceeding from the Loving-kindness of a merciful God. In our right minds what could we wish to be altered in outward things? All things are right, well-ordered, and the language is, "God knows best." But "Thy will be done" is a hard lesson to learn, and far beyond what flesh and blood can attain unto. Tribulation must work patience, and when God blesses us with that, we can hear the rod, and know who hath appointed it. What have we to fear but sin, and in that we have very much to fear; although we may be blest to have the sting taken away through a blessed deliverance, nevertheless that enemy never dies, and it has made all true Christians groan, and surely it will us. But what a mercy it is to groan on account of it, instead of committing it with delight and greediness!

I feel the power of it, and feel grateful to God it does not reign with that power it sometimes threatens to do, and it is a great mercy that we are not left to contend with so powerful an enemy in our own strength. I desire to bless God for restraining grace as well as saving grace, and I am sure that none are well kept, except those whom the Lord keeps. How much sin we are conscious of, and how much we are ignorant of! Who is a God like unto our God, that pardoneth iniquity and delighteth in mercy?

At times Christ is precious to my soul, and I can bless God for His great mercies to such a worm as I am; and at times I feel as if grace could not possibly be in my heart, and all comfort, joy and peace are gone, and I seem to have no heart to read the Bible, no heart to pray, much less to preach. Nevertheless, through mercy I continue to this day, and to the Lord be all the praise! Necessity compels us to contend for the renewings and revivings of God's Spirit, and makes us to know that all our springs are in God, and from Him all fruit comes.

* * * *

It is an exercise to the mind to know what invitations to accept and what to refuse. It is well when we are not left to confer much with flesh and blood. To go where the Lord would have us go, and where He will condescend to bless His word through such worms, is the best. Last week I preached at Yately, Hartley Row and Wallingford. The friends in Wilts were asking whether you would come down there. . . I shall be glad to hear that poor P. is in a smoother path, though smooth paths are dangerous.

Yours affectionately,

William Tiptaft.

LII

To a Young Friend.

Abingdon, January 8, 1856.

Dear Friend,—Your kind letter was duly received bringing "good tidings." I am glad to receive such blessed testimonies of the Lord's loving-kindness; for it confirms those who have been favoured in a similar manner, that the hearts of others are filled with gratitude, when the Lord appears for them, and sets their souls at liberty. You have known adversity before prosperity. "I will rejoice in Thy mercy, for Thou hast considered my trouble; Thou hast known my soul in adversities; Thou hast not shut me up in the hand of the enemy; Thou hast set my feet in a large room."

When the Lord delivered my soul, thirteen years ago this month, how precious was Christ to my soul! The promises came with sweetness and power, as if they were all mine, and more than I could receive. They were to me like a full breast to a fasted suckling. Those who long for a deliverance are brought to value such a wonderful mercy and favour above all that the world calls good or great. After I was blest how I desired that those I know who were in bondage might have their souls delivered; and I could understand different parts of Scripture, hymns, and accounts of the enjoyments of those whose experience had been published, in a way I never could before; and I could tell that others were not in my state who had not known these secrets. I did not want to be robbed; so I did not like to go into a shop to buy a common article. Those in much sorrow of soul, or in much enjoyment of soul, are not much fit for this world; but not many are mourning as sinners, or rejoicing as knowing themselves to be sinners saved by grace.

I have been tried about my blessing at times very much, whether it was real: and ofttimes, as Hart says, it has encouraged me, that if it were not a revelation, it was a revolution; for it caused a great change in my soul. It was a feast of fat things. My cup ran over and I shed many tears of joy. I had a new song put into my mouth; so I could bless and praise God. How precious was Psalm cxvi. to me and many of Hart's hymns, particularly:

"How high a privilege 'tis to know," etc.

"That special grant of heaven," I never understood till then.

Your bondage was both long and severe; so you can but rejoice now the jubilee time is come. Some will envy you, and some will be jealous; if others in their bonds are led to pray more earnestly for liberty, they will reap a benefit from your deliverance. You can never prize it too highly, nor can you ever speak too highly of the blessed Deliverer. If you had a thousand crowns, you would put them on His head, and if you had a thousand tongues, you would be glad to sing His praises with every one. It is a comfort for you to have a father to talk over these blessed realities with. His heart will be glad. "This my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found."

Give my love to your father and any enquiring friends. May the Lord be with you, to bless and keep you, and may you still be favoured with the Lord's presence.

Yours in the Truth,

William Tiptaft.

LIII

To J. C. Philpot.

Abingdon, July 12, 1864.

My dear Philpot,—You will be glad to hear that my soul has been greatly blest. It was a blessing similar to the one I enjoyed at Oakham, October 15th last.

"Thus far my God hath led me on,
And made His truth and mercy known."

The friends were anxious that my soul should be blest in my new house. Friend H. had been praying that my soul might be blest on Lord's day, at chapel. Although a conveyance was sent twice for me, I was not well enough to go. About tea-time on the 10th, my soul began to enjoy the Lord's loving-kindness and goodness. I shed very many tears, and could realize my interest in the covenant of grace, so that I was not afraid to die. I did not want to be robbed. Friends came to see me, and were witnesses of my blessed frame of soul. I valued the blessing and do still. Anyone afflicted as I am will surely be grateful; and if their mouths were not filled with praises, they would be condemned for ingratitude. I would not barter away my spiritual blessing for riches and honours. I read the March *Standard* of 1843, where the blessing is recorded of the first baptism at Abingdon. My soul was blest at Oakham, May 22nd, in the evening; but I had a greater sense of God's loving-kindness and of His pardoning love this last time. I am near the Cemetery. What a very great mercy to be made fit for the great change! May the Lord cause me to pray earnestly that my last days may be my best. What a difference there is in having a knowledge of gospel mysteries, and having the soul blest with heart-felt experience of the various portions of Scripture setting forth the liberty of the gospel, and also sweet enjoyment of hymns exalting the riches of God's grace in saving vile sinners. We cannot value too highly a grain of humbling grace. Such a religion must be bought; no cross, no crown. It is through much tribulation that we are to go to glory. Then what can we say in favour of a smooth path, or of such ministers as please their hearers by encouraging those who have a knowledge of gospel mysteries and a little morality? Real saints, who fear God, find that they have many trials and crosses, and that they need them. How few ministers in London preach the Spirit's work! How little there is of that preaching that goes from heart to heart! Those who want to be searched and tried would be a very small proportion to those who want smooth things and peace. It is a narrow way to heaven, and none can be rightly in the path except by God's grace; nor can they keep there, except by grace. What debtors we are to grace!

> "Come, Thou fount of every blessing,
>   Tune my heart to sing Thy grace;
> Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
>   Call for songs of loudest praise."

It is thirty-two years this month since I first preached in the large, dark city of London. Many have died in Christ, with a blessed experience of divine things; but how very many have died who have not had a religion of the right sort! Many great professors in town, before they die, may be brought low enough to say that it is a mercy to be well laid in the grave. God has been a kind and good God to me, in various ways, for more than sixty-one years. I wish to acknowledge His goodness to me.

"Mercies of providence and grace
Flow from Thy bounteous hand;
These claim incessant songs of praise,
And fervent love demand."

How little gratitude for such great blessings in upholding, keeping and preserving us to the present moment! If we know that it is a mercy to be out of hell, we have no room for boasting. What a precious Saviour Christ is to those who really need Him!

May the Lord bless your own soul in preaching, and others will be blest also. Yours very affectionately,

William Tiptaft.

Within six weeks of writing that last letter all that was left on earth of William Tiptaft was laid to rest in Abingdon Cemetery. And in the Abbey Chapel, above the pulpit from which for many years he had preached so faithfully, his sorrowing friends erected in due course a marble tablet with the following inscription. (See Illustration, page 46.)

To the Memory
OF
WILLIAM TIPTAFT,
AT WHOSE SOLE EXPENSE THIS CHAPEL WAS BUILT A.D. 1832,
AND WHO BOLDLY, FAITHFULLY, AND EXPERIMENTALLY
PREACHED IN IT FOR MORE THAN THIRTY YEARS
THE GLORIOUS AND BLESSED TRUTHS OF THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL,
COMBINING WITH A MOST SEARCHING MINISTRY
THE TENDEREST REGARD FOR THE FEEBLEST MARK OF GRACE,
AND ADORNING THE DOCTRINE,
NOT ONLY BY THE MOST UNWEARIED LOVE AND LIBERALITY
TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK, EVEN TO THE LOSS OF ALL THINGS
FOR CHRIST'S SAKE, BUT BY SETTING TO ALL AN EXAMPLE OF A MOST
GODLY, SELF-DENYING, AND CIRCUMSPECT LIFE.
DIED, AUGUST 17th, 1864, AGED 61 YEARS.

A Selection from William Tiptaft's characteristic "Sayings" will be found in Appendix I.

LETTERS

OF

JOSEPH CHARLES PHILPOT.

LETTERS OF JOSEPH CHARLES PHILPOT.

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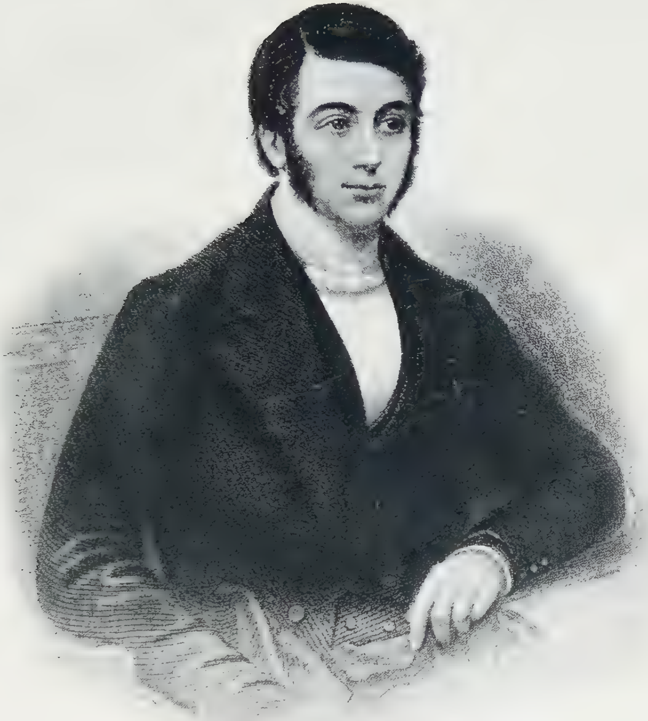
(1)

To William Tiptaft.

Walmer, Sept. 7, 1831.

My dear Tiptaft,—You ask me to write you as long a letter as your own. Please to bear in mind that your writing is larger and wider than mine, and therefore, because this sheet is not foolscap, do not think I am unmindful of your request.

I trust you will deliberate much and long, and seek much the direction of the Spirit, before you venture on the step you meditate of resigning your living. You are placed in a very important station, and, according to your own testimony, have many opportunities of usefulness. You say your congregation is undiminished, that many come to hear you from distant parts, and that you have many spiritual hearers. You have no wish to remain for the sake of the loaves and fishes, and would willingly give up your house and furniture and live in any obscure place that you might be placed in. All those who have left the Church agree in this, that a man should have a clear direction from the Spirit, and that if he leaves it without sufficient grounds, and seeing his way clearly, he will repent of it. Your eyes are partially open to see its defects, and most of your present intimates have either left her communion, or are dissatisfied with what they see in her. All this works on your mind and perplexes you. Now, a good deal of what is merely carnal may here influence your mind. Your objections may arise, not from the teachings and leadings of the Spirit, but may be merely the workings of the flesh and the temptations of Satan, who would gladly see you removed from your present sphere of usefulness. I do not say you may not be under the leadings of the Spirit, but I say they should be very manifest and clear, much more so than they now seem to be, before you should take so important a step. My dear friend, do nothing rashly. Seek only to be led and taught of God. Cease from man—even spiritual men. They cannot direct you in such



Yours affectionately
J. C. Philpot

JOSEPH CHARLES PHILPOT, M.A. (1802—1869)

(Fellow of Worcester College, Oxford, 1826—1835).

difficult circumstances. I would not wish you to stay a moment, if you were really led of the Spirit to quit the Church; but I am afraid of your acting on the suggestion of others, or from feelings merely carnal. The flesh, you know, is wondrously changeable, and can work just as well one way as another. It may work to keep you in, and it may work to turn you out. All I would say is, seek earnestly the direction of the Spirit, and do not move till you see your way clearly, either by inward light and manifestation, or outward providence. I think the Bishop will not bear with you much longer, and then you will see your way clearer. You may think me carnal, and so on, but I cannot be wrong in advising you to seek earnestly direction from the Lord, and not to move without it. It will be a heavy blow for Sutton and its vicinity if you leave. I feel very sorry to think that many who now can hear you will not then be able, and I think, too, of Stadham. May the Lord guide and direct you. Do not act precipitately, or from merely carnal feeling, but wait to have your way very clearly made out.

I hope you will go over to Stadham, before you go away for a time. Can't you go over the day this reaches you? it is the usual lecture-night. I could wish that Brenton had more the gift of preaching, and could speak more to the comfort and edification of the people. His sermons are too dry and abstract, too much the reflections of his own mind, and need simplicity of statement and application. They are good and true as far as they go, but they want that energy and speaking to the heart, and suiting it to the cares and wants of the hearers, which make preaching profitable. They require too much attention to follow, and a mind in some degree imbued with the truth, and able to catch it when obscurely stated, to be generally useful. I am thankful, however, for the seasonable help the Lord has sent me in him, and feel a confidence in him which I could not have done in another. Besides which, I trust the Lord will teach him, and apply the truth with such power to his heart, that he will be constrained to speak it with power to others. Preaching without book, too, will, I think, be useful in leading him to greater simplicity of statement, and bringing him out of that essay style into which he has fallen. I fear I shall not be able to comply with the wishes of the Stadham people in taking a part of the service. In the first place, I need rest, especially during the winter, when each cold affects my chest; and, secondly, if I were sufficiently strong, I should not think it right to interfere with Brenton. I have left him there to be in my place, which he has kindly consented to occupy; and if I were to return, of course the whole would seem to revert to me, and he be only my assistant. I think it best to leave him in sole charge, and am thankful I can do it so much to my own satisfaction. His visits and conversation, and his lectures, perhaps may be more profitable than his preaching, and it may lead the children of God to pray for him, and so be beneficial to their souls and his. I was much pleased with a little note from Mrs. T., in which she expressed herself as thankful for Brenton's being there, and seemed to imply this was the general feeling. I am anxious to know all about them. When you go over, make a point of seeing some of them, and let me know how their souls fare. I am glad Mr. —— has come to hear you. There seems something like a shaking there. Few have, I believe, abused you more. His conversation was a tissue of oaths. I rejoice that Husband and you are so intimate. Your preaching at S. M. would, I am sure, give offence. The Pharisees can bear the Law better than the Gospel, and even the mild Husband now gives offence, and will do so more and more.

Miss —— is, I fear, something like the robin spoken of in the "Pilgrim's Progress," who can eat sometimes grains of wheat and sometimes worms and spiders. I am quite sick of modern religion; it is such a mixture, such a medley, such a compromise. I find much, indeed, of this religion in my own heart, for it suits the flesh well; but I would not have it so, and grieve it should be so. We sadly want stirring up here. It is a trying situation to live altogether without spiritual society, and more worldly company comes to this house than is profitable to me, as I cannot altogether refuse to enter occasionally into their conversation. I think of leaving about the 16th or 17th, and going to London, and thence to Petersfield. I cannot yet decide where I shall go to spend the winter. I wish to go to Plymouth, and think it very likely I may decide to go thither. The back of the Isle of Wight would be better for my health; but I should have no society there, and no opportunities of hearing anything profitable. At Plymouth I should find many friends, and have the opportunity of hearing the word. My sister is now staying at Stoke. The climate, I am told, is very damp and rainy, which is bad for me. I trust I shall be guided right. I heard Fowler preach at the little "Refuge" in Deal. Old John Kent, the author of "Gospel

Hymns," was there, and I had the pleasure of shaking hands with him. He had heard and drunk tea with Bulteel about three weeks before. I do not think it likely I shall speak to the people at Deal; I do not see my way clear. I do not wish to give up Stadham and forget my licence, which I should in that case do. I trust I am not unwilling, should the Lord please, to forsake worldly honours and gain for Him; but I must see my way clear.

* * * * *

I should wish to know on what plan Bulteel means to conduct his chapel. I do not like to promise beforehand; but if his intended chapel is on such principles as seem right and eligible, I should be glad to contribute £5. I cannot afford more in my present circumstances.

I shall be glad to hear from you shortly again, and let me hear something about my Stadham people. I am sure Brenton would be glad for you to speak to the people, but on Tuesday night, being harvest-time, he was most likely apprehensive of not getting a congregation. May the Lord teach you out of His Holy Word, and make your ministry profitable to all His dear children.

Believe me to be, with true affection,
Yours in the Lord,
J. C. P.

(2)

To Mrs. Rackham.

London, Sept. 23, 1831.

My dear Mrs. Rackham,*—Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied unto you from God the Father and Jesus Christ our Lord. I take the opportunity of my friend and brother Mr. Tiptaft's meeting me in London to send you a few lines to express my remembrance of and affection towards you in the Lord. I trust, during the season that has past since I saw you, that you have been enabled to trust in Him, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. I hope the Lord has shown you more and more of His cleansing blood and justifying righteousness, and given you faith to look to the one and lay hold of the other. To feel our deep need of forgiveness and reconciliation is God's gift; to see that there is a Saviour provided, who by His life and death put away sin and brought in everlasting righteousness, is God's gift; to lay hold of and believe on this Saviour, so precisely suited to our lost and condemned state, is God's gift.

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* Mrs. Rackham died at Sutton, near Dorking, Surrey, March 25, 1857, aged 78. Her end was peace.

The whole plan and scheme of redemption in its first devising, after-execution, and individual application to the heart and conscience of the child of God is, from first to last, the work of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. This is a truth of which we should be deeply and firmly persuaded. We must learn and feel our lost and helpless state as sprung from our Covenant Head, Adam, by natural generation. We must be deeply and inwardly persuaded that we are utterly dead and powerless in consequence of this original sin of Adam, in which we are involved by being in him at the time of his fall, and that we have neither will nor power to see, relish, or believe the things of the Spirit of God.

This conviction, applied by the Holy Ghost to our hearts, will stir us up to earnest prayer that the eyes of our understanding may be enlightened, that we may have the truth, as it is in Jesus, applied to our souls with power and the Holy Ghost, and much assurance, and that we may have an experimental divine faith in the Person and work of the Son of God wrought in our souls. I trust the Lord has shown you this, and thus stirred you up to true and earnest prayer that you may have the truth brought home to your soul by the Holy Ghost, and are desirous to experience all the powerful teachings of the Lord the Spirit, though the word of God in His hands should even, as in the Virgin Mary (Luke ii. 35), be a sword to pierce thine own soul, and divide asunder soul and spirit, and the joints and marrow, by discerning and revealing the thoughts and intents of the heart (Heb. iv. 12). I mean by this that through grace you are willing to have the secret chambers of your heart laid open to your view, and be stripped of your own righteousness, that you may learn only to glory in the Lord. We must come to this, if we hope to be saved, and earnestly seek the Spirit's teachings, whatever sharp lessons He may teach us, and however He may humble us in our own sight.

Through mercy, my health is much recovered, though my chest continues weak, and is soon irritated by exertion; my general health is much restored, and I feel stronger and less nervous than I did at Stadham. The sea air has, through God's blessing, braced me, and, my chest excepted, I feel nearly as well, though not so strong, as before this attack. I was forced, by a concurrence of circumstances, to take an afternoon service a few Sundays back, as if I had not done so the church must have been either shut up, or served by a carnal minister. I was much helped at the time, and preached for nearly three-quarters of an hour, but suffered from it afterwards, my chest being weak and heated for two or three days. I trust that, during the interval which I have allowed myself for rest, it may please the Lord so far to restore me as to allow me to preach once more in the pulpits I have, through His mercy and providence, occupied amongst you. I sincerely hope that during that time the Lord may teach and bless your present minister to the edification of many. Fail not to pray for him, that the Lord may speak in him and by him to the hearts of His people, and furnish him with food suitable to the weak and to the strong. I look to the prayer-meeting as a means of great good in the Lord's hands. May He give a spirit of grace and supplication to its members, and lead them privately and publicly to intercede with Him for a blessing for minister and people. Those who do not pray aloud in these meetings may plead earnestly with God, both at home and when assembled together, and these prayers He that searcheth the hearts will answer, if offered up by the Spirit that dwelleth in them.

Pray also that your own eyes, and the eyes of the church at Stadham and Chisleton, may be enlightened to discern the devices of Satan, and that that cruel wolf may not be allowed to rend the sheep. A praying church and a watchful church must flourish. When it becomes cold and lukewarm, when prayer is restrained and it ceases to be watchful, then the great adversary gains an advantage, and everything that is miserable creeps in, to the grief of God's children, to the joy of the world, and to the destruction of souls. Do not be unmindful that you have a God to glorify by your holy life and conversation, especially as being the mother and mistress of a family, before whom you should let your light shine, that they may see there is a truth, reality, and power in religion, and that it is not a mere change of opinions.

I was glad to hear Mr. B —— has borrowed a religious book of Mr. Brenton. In your conversations with him I would have you avoid all disputes about election and such doctrines, and speak rather of such subjects as our natural sinfulness and condemnation, the necessity of having Christ for our perfect Saviour, the efficacy of His blood and His blood alone, and the need of embracing this by faith, together with the necessity of being born again and being taught of God. Such subjects will either be so distasteful that he will cease to speak upon them, or will be of use to him. Disputes about election will only harass your own mind, and stir up in him a mere spirit of carnal reasoning which will only do him harm. Seek wisdom from the Lord to direct you, and speak in His strength only, and not your own. But a holy, self-denying, and separated life is the best preacher.

I trust that, with respect to your temporal concerns, the Lord is teaching you the meaning of that text, Matt. vi. 33, 34. Read the whole of that chapter, from verse 19 to the end, and seek of the Lord faith to believe and feel it in all its truth and power. Read also what the Apostle says to Timothy, 1 Tim. vi. 6—16. Observe how God there tells us to be content with food and raiment, and declares that godliness with contentment is great gain. See what he says of those that desire to be rich; how that they err from the faith, and pierce themselves through with many sorrows, and bids the man of God flee these things, and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and meekness; and bids him keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. There is much instruction in these words if the Lord is pleased to seal it home on your heart and make it a principle of action. Let me advise you, my dear Mrs. Rackham, to be much in reading the Scriptures. Be like the Bereans, and search the Scriptures daily, Acts xvii. 11, and like David, Psalm cxix. 11, 97, 105, 140, 162, where he expresses his delight in God's word. See also the character given of the righteous man, Psalm i. verse 2. Pray earnestly that the word may be wrought into your heart, that its precepts, truths, and promises may be the comfort of your days and nights, the motive of your actions, and the guide to all your ways. Remember that the Lord has helped you through many afflictions, and turned them into blessings; and so He will be ever with you, to keep, guide, and bless you. Only trust in Him.

Do not hanker after this wretched world, or desire its honours and riches for yourself or your children. Give them up to the Lord, and ask Him to put them into such situations of life as may be for their spiritual good and for His glory ; and be willing that they should be poor and despised, if it be His will. Seek also earnest blessings for the church where you live and the Church of Christ in general, that the Lord may pour out His blessing richly upon it. Seek for a spirit of humility, faith, and love, and avoid everything that may produce contrary feelings in the brethren. Set your face against everything that is ungodly and profane, wherever you may meet it ; and in the regulation and management of your own household act as a Christian mistress and a Christian mother. A Gospel practice is the only outward proof of a Gospel faith, and wherever the principles of God's word are wrought into the heart they must and will produce the fruits of holiness and godliness in the life and conversation.

I hope Elizabeth is able still to attend the Sunday-school, and that her class is improving. I would not wish her to set the children too long lessons, as I would sooner they should learn accurately and well, than much. And I would wish her to consider the different ages and capacities of the children, and set them their tasks accordingly. I do not like that they should learn to hate school, and what they are there taught, as it may have an unhappy influence all their days ; and the way to teach them to love school and their teachers is by giving them to learn what they are able to accomplish easily, and by treating them with the greatest kindness and gentleness, and yet due strictness and severity, if needful.

Believe me to be,
Your affectionate Friend in the Lord Jesus,
J. C. P.

(3)

To Mrs. Rackham.

Petersfield, Nov. 17, 1831.

My dear Mrs. Rackham, Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied unto you through the love of God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord. I thank my God that the word which I preached amongst you did not return unto God void, but was accompanied with the power of the Spirit to the heart of some, and amongst them, I trust, to you also. This gives me confidence in writing to you, and I hope I shall be enabled to say something which may profit and comfort you. It grieves me to think that the sheep of

Christ amongst you should not be walking in that light and comfort which is their portion and privilege. It has pleased our heavenly Father, who does all things in wisdom and love, to unfit me for that work which once I performed amongst you, and which it is my desire again to commence when it shall be His will. But why should you not still enjoy what you once enjoyed ? Christ is the same, and His Spirit is the same, and the word of God is the same. I am afraid the children of God have been looking at times past too much to the instrument, and not been looking simply to Christ, that they might be filled out of the fulness that is laid up in Him. And, therefore, I trust God is teaching them this lesson, to cease from man, and to wait only upon Him.

My desire is to labour again in the vineyard where I laboured in times past, and I trust in God's good time I shall be allowed once more to go in and out amongst you. God has wonderfully restored my health since I left Stadham, though I am by no means so strong as I was before my illness, and am obliged to continue indoors when the weather is at all cold. Sir William Knighton discovered, I think, the cause of my illness under God, and said it arose entirely from over-exertion and exhaustion of the vital energy. By rest, through God's mercy, it is recovering ; and here, I think, we may see the good hand of God in afflicting me with illness at the time He did. If I had gone on as before, most likely when illness came my constitution would have sunk under it. I trust now, by resting some little time longer, I shall have recovered sufficiently to labour again in the vineyard of the Lord. By this dispensation also God may be teaching His children at Stadham, Chisleton, and Ascot to depend more simply on Him for His teaching. We know what the children of Israel said in the wilderness (Numb. xxi. 5), "Our soul loatheth this light bread," and so, perhaps, where the children of God hear the sound of the Gospel so continually, they may become indifferent to it, and not receive it with that sweetness and power which they once did ; and God has various ways of training up His children, and His ways are most wise, deep, and unsearchable. Jacob once said (Gen. xlii. 36), "All these things are against me," when those very things were working together for his good. But afterwards, when he saw his beloved son Joseph (Gen. xlvi. 30), he could say, "Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive" ; and again (xlviii. 11), "I had not thought to see thy face ; and lo, God hath shewed me also thy seed." And thus it is now; we cannot see the wisdom of God's dealings at the time, but can afterwards look back and see (Psalm cvii. 7), "He has led us forth by the right way, that we might go to a city of habitation." "Those that sow in tears shall reap in joy."

The advice which I would give to the children of God at Stadham, etc., is to search the Scriptures much for themselves, and be much in prayer for themselves and for each other. If they cannot derive that benefit which they would wish from their present minister, let them pray much for him, that God would teach him, and speak in him and by him to their souls. You may call to mind that when I left Stadham for a little while in May, 1830, the children of God were much in prayer that when I returned I might be enabled to preach more to their comfort and edification. I think they acknowledged at the time that the Lord, in a measure at least, heard their prayers. Let them now pray in the same way for their present minister, and the Lord will hear and answer. I really do not know where I could get a more satisfactory person. You all know how much trouble and anxiety it cost me, when Mr. T—— left, to procure the aid of any one even from Sunday to Sunday, and scarcely any except my dear friend Mr. G—— preached to the edification of the saints. You should consider how much worse you might be off, and probably would be, should the Lord remove Dr. P——. I don't mean, my dear Mrs. Rackham, when I say "you," to admonish you in particular, but I speak to all the people of God who love to hear the sound of the Gospel. I believe that you love the truth, whoever preaches it, and desire to receive the engrafted word with meekness and humility.

In all your various trials, both personal and domestic, and what regards the Church of God, put in practice the command of the apostle, Philip. iv. 6. If you do this, you will find the promise in the seventh verse made good, "And the peace of God," etc. Pray for yourself, for your family, for the children of God around you, for your present minister, for all saints (Ephesians vi. 18), and for me also—that my health, if the Lord will, may be restored, and that I may come again to you, when I do come, "in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ" (Rom. xv. 29). Pray that I may come unto you with joy, by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed (Rom. xv. 32). Seek to be guided in all things by the Spirit; for "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

Meditate upon James i. 5; John xvi. 13—15; xiv. 13, 14; Luke xi. 13; xviii. 1; Prov. ii. 3—6; iii. 5, 6; Jer. xxix. 11—13. I could fill my letter with sweet and comfortable passages, as, indeed, the Word of God is full of comfort and instruction. "Only believe; all things are possible to him that believeth." If you are in trouble about temporal concerns, read over, and pray upon, Matt. vi. 25—34, and Jer. xlix. 11, and ask the Lord for faith to believe and live upon these promises. The Lord seems to have helped you in inducing Mr. and Mrs. B.—— to continue with you. The Lord, in sending bread, does not promise there shall be no trials and crosses with it. The bread is to be eaten in the sweat of the face (Gen. iii. 19), and so those that do not labour bodily for it must often labour for it in their mind. We are obliged sometimes to "eat our bread by weight and with care" (Ezek. iv. 16); but, if God will, our countenances, if we eat only pulse, "may appear fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat of the portion of the king's meat" (Daniel i. 12, 15).

With respect to placing E—— with Mrs. W——, I would have you do what you think right in your conscience. Do not for temporal advantages do anything which you think might hurt her soul. But I am not sufficiently acquainted with all the circumstances to give my advice. Seek the will of God in the matter, and act as you think right in His sight, without regard to man.

Remember me very kindly to your nieces, the Miss R——s. I trust they are cleaving to the Lord through evil report and good report, and glorifying their Saviour in their life and conversation, separating themselves in heart and spirit from the world. The greatest kindness that you could do them is to tell them where they are wrong, if you see anything of that kind in them. "In many things," you know, "we offend all." Give my Christian love also to Mrs. L——, and tell her to look to Jesus for strength in all things; and let her light shine in that wicked neighbourhood where she dwells, that they may take knowledge of her that she has been with Jesus. Remember me also very affectionately to Mrs. L—— and Sally N——, and bid them watch over their hearts and tongues where they live, that they may not speak unadvisedly with their lips. May the Lord comfort and teach them, and make them shine as lights in the world. Give my Christian love also to Sally and Nanny H——. I trust the Lord is with them, to comfort them, and to say unto their souls, "I am thy salvation."

Your mind may, perhaps, be troubled by what you hear from Oxford about Mr. Bulteel's change of views. Let not that trouble you. You know what truth God formerly blessed to your soul; hold it fast. Remember you are a poor sinner who can only be saved by Jesus, and that the promise is given to those that believe in Him, that they shall be saved. Cleave simply to this, that His blood cleanseth from all sin, and let nothing drive you from that. Avoid all questions and strifes of words, and look simply to Him that died on Calvary, and is now risen again to make intercession for His people, and to appear a second time for their salvation. I trust I do not forget any of the children of God, though I may not now mention them. I have spoken to you of those whom you chiefly know; but I send my love to all.

Believe me to be,
Yours in true affection,
J. C. P.

(4)

To William Tiptaft.

Petersfield, Nov. 28, 1831.

My dear Tiptaft,—When Brenton made me the offer of my coming to Stadham, it seemed to me, at first, the very opening I had been desiring and praying for. But since I have considered the subject more maturely, I have thought it best not to accept his offer. My desire is to do just what God pleases in the matter, and to be willing to go or stay just as He thinks best. At the same time, I find myself counting the weeks to next spring, and feel somewhat of what Laban said to Jacob, "Thou sore longest after thy father's house." But I think, all things considered, I am doing what is best in staying here. Though it has pleased God to restore me to much better health, yet it is not so far established as to enable me to face the fatigues and cold of the winter, and I could not think of turning Brenton out of his lodgings at this time of the year. Besides which, I trust I am not altogether without use here. If I did not think Brenton a child of God, and one who had the spiritual welfare of my people at heart, I would not stay away from them a day; but though he may not preach with power, or to much edification, I fully believe he declares the truth. I at times feel very anxious about them, and trust it may yet be the Lord's will that I may return to them.

I am glad you are not likely to leave the neighbourhood of Sutton, as I believe you have been made useful there. You should take care to have your chapel sufficiently large to hold a good number, as it is likely to be much crowded. This step of yours is not likely to meet with the approbation of the vicar of Abingdon, nor, indeed, of many of our friends in your neighbourhood; but if the Lord gives you His blessing, you need not mind what is said or thought . . .

To make light of experience cannot be right, for all the power of religion consists in it, and I fully believe, what you have often said, that where there is no experience there is no religion. I am sure, for my own part, that the only time when the truths of Scripture influence my mind and practice, is when they are felt experimentally in the heart; and, I am quite sure, if I knew more of the mighty operation of the Spirit in my soul, I should walk much more happily, humbly, and consistently. I fully agree to all you say about the work of grace in the soul, and earnestly desire the gift of the Spirit, that I may feel more and more deeply the things of Christ. God has given us His Son; in addition to that, He has promised to give His Spirit, to take the things of Christ, and show them to us; and if the possession of the Spirit does not distinguish the believer from the unbeliever, I know not what does.

Though it may be a trial, it is perhaps best for you to have no friend with whom you may readily consult upon the matters that interest you, as it must throw you more immediately upon God to obtain wisdom and counsel from Him. There are many promises of this in the word of God, and I believe where the eye is single, the path is not in many cases very difficult. Scripture speaks much of patience, and I suppose we must be still before we shall see the salvation of God. I observe in the Old Testament that the saints waited much and long for the fulfilment of God's promises, and that, generally, help was delayed to the last extremity, and then afforded promptly and effectually. I was much struck the other day with Proverbs xvi. 9; I found it very applicable to my own case, as I was much perplexed about coming back to Stadham. My inclination is to go there, but I certainly, at present, do not see the way clear.

I often think of you and your great kindness to me last winter; indeed, I trust I shall never forget your unwearied attention to such an invalid as I was then. May the Lord richly reward you! I think I have, on the whole, enjoyed more of the power of the truth since I have been here, than I had done for some time previously; but I daily feel how much I have to learn. What I need is the gift of the Spirit; this is the promise of the Gospel, and without it all that Christ did, taught, and suffered, is nothing to us. I trust the Spirit has not left my people at Stadham. I am sometimes apprehensive of their becoming lukewarm and dead. But the Lord must keep those who are faithful to His promises, and can keep them without human means.

Yours affectionate Friend,

J. C. P.

(5)

TO JOSEPH PARRY, ALLINGTON, DEVIZES, WILTS.

Stadham, near Wallingford, Oct. 11, 1833.

My dear Sir,—Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied unto you through the experimental, soul-humbling, soul-melting, soul-rejoicing knowledge of the gracious and living Immanuel.

I am thankful to the God of prayer for having put a spirit of prayer into your heart for such a hard-hearted sinner as myself, as I doubt not you mingled, among your petitions for my coming among you, sundry desires for my own experimental acquaintance with divine things. I cannot, however, see my way to come among you at present, as I am still ministering to the little flock amongst whom I have been going in and out for some time past. My connection with the Establishment is not yet broken, but I am inclined to think it shortly will. The Lord, in answer to prayer, brought me back in so remarkable a way not two years ago, and so wonderfully strengthened me for my work, after being laid aside by illness one and a quarter years, that I have always felt I could not leave until I should see the way very clearly. For these last few months past I have laid the matter before Him, and sought of Him wisdom and guidance, as the corruption of the Establishment in practice and principle has been much opened to my mind. I think I now see symptoms of my way being about to be laid open, and that I am very likely to be put out of the curacy. If this should be the case, my way is open at once, as it is my ministry here which chiefly detains me in the Establishment. A few days will probably decide, and, should I be removed from the curacy, my present intention is to remain here till the spring (God willing), and then go into Kent for a season, where my friends reside, and where I should have an opening to preach the word.

There is not a soul upon earth to whom I have communicated these particulars, and therefore I beg you will for the present keep them secret. I have been informed upon the best authority that a complaint has been, or will be, laid against me before the bishop for certain comments, which I lately made, respecting the conduct of clergymen taking out shooting-licences; and if I stand to the ground I have taken, which I trust the Lord will give me grace to do, I think he will remove me. I would sooner be turned out than go out. Let them thrust me out of the land of Egypt and the house of bondage and my way is clear enough. No one knows what it is to give up a people who love you, and whom you love, and a situation where the Lord has blessed you, but those who have the trial. I can safely say that my return hither, Christmas, 1831, was the directest answer to prayer I ever had in my life, and therefore I cannot leave until I see my way clearly opened in providence or grace. Be pleased to keep what I have communicated secret, as not a single person, not even my assistant, knows what steps are pursuing against me but the parties concerned.

Let me have your prayers that the Lord will guide me aright, give me a spirit of faithfulness, joined with meekness and humility, and separate me in His own time and way from a corrupt system; and more especially that He would be pleased to take present matters into His own powerful hand, and lead the devices of men to accomplish His own gracious and eternal purposes. Oh! for grace to believe and love, to seek His will, to have the mind of Christ, and a single eye to His glory! Oh! for a heart to fear none, and to please none, but the risen Lord, and to taste His love, constraining the soul to love, delight in, and obey Him!

Present my affectionate remembrance to Mrs. Parry; and believe me to be

Yours affectionately in Him who is the Lord of all.

J. C. P.

(6)

To Joseph Parry.

Stadhampton, April 19th, 1834.

My dear Mr. Parry,—Our mutual friend Tiptaft informed me a few days ago of his visit to Allington and of your wish to hear from me. So dark, ignorant, and benighted is my mind, that if I were to give you a view of what is doing in the chambers of imagery, it would afford you but little pleasure or profit. The first time that I saw you, as we were standing in the churchyard together, I think I observed that I knew more of the dark than of the bright side of religion, and I feel it to be so still. I cannot, like some professors, make to myself wings to soar when I please to the third heaven, nor kindle a fire and compass myself about with sparks, and then walk in the light of it. I am obliged to come to this: "Behold, He shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening." "When He hideth His face, who can behold Him?" Some of our professors here can always lay hold of the promises, and so strong is their faith, that they neither doubt nor fear; but this is a religion which I cannot come up to. And when I see that this faith of theirs is the work of man, and born of the flesh, I tell them that I would sooner have my unbelief than their faith. Not that I think unbelief and darkness good things, but this I learn from them, which few know in our day, that faith is "the *gift* of God"; and this, too, I know, that the feeling sense of our own helplessness and unbelief is the necessary, yea, the only preparation of the soul for the inward discovery and manifestation of Christ. We have in our day too many spiritual thieves and liars. They first get their assurance by climbing over the wall, and then "boast themselves of a false gift," which, as Solomon says, is "like clouds and wind without rain," *i.e.*, has all the appearance of watering our souls, and then goes off without giving them a drop. From such a religion may the Lord keep us. It is better to be of a humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud. It is better to sigh and mourn over a heart full of unbelief and corruption, than to take to ourselves one promise which the Lord does not apply. Many will tell us to believe, and say, "Ye are idle, ye are idle," who have never been in the iron furnace, nor sighed out of the low dungeon.

I believe, for myself, that the souls which can really and spiritually rejoice in the Lord are very few, and that their experience is very much chequered with seasons of darkness and distress. And as for that religion which tells us we must rejoice, because believers are told in the Bible to rejoice always, it savours to me too much of man's power and free-will to be of God. The religion which I want is that of the Holy Ghost. I know nothing but what He teaches me; I feel nothing but what He works in me; I believe nothing but what He shows me; I only mourn when He smites the rock; I only rejoice when He reveals the Saviour. I do not say I can rise up to all this, but this is the religion I profess, seek after, and teach; and when the blessed Spirit is not at work in me, and with me, I fall back into all the darkness, unbelief, earthliness, idleness, carelessness, infidelity, and helplessness of my Adam nature.

Religion is a supernatural and mysterious thing. It is as much hidden from us, until God reveals it, as God Himself, who dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto. It is the work of the Holy Ghost from first to last; and no text is truer than this: "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him." He will have mercy on whom He will have mercy, and He will have compassion on whom He will have compassion; and these favoured objects of mercy, and these alone, know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent; and that happy soul which is thus experimentally taught of the Holy Ghost, and brought into a heavenly fellowship with the Father and the Son, will enjoy for ever the Triune Jehovah, when professors, high and low, doctrinal, experimental, and practical, Calvinist and Arminian, will be cast into the blackness of darkness for ever. A man thus experimentally taught will be humble and abased, will be swift to hear and slow to speak, will have a tender conscience and a godly fear, will seek rather to please God than man, and would sooner speak with God for five minutes than with a frothy professor for an hour. This religion I am seeking after, though miles and miles from it; but no other will satisfy or content me.

I cannot say I am at all nearer leaving my post here than when I last wrote; indeed, whilst I am heard with acceptance, and have nothing to perform which presses on my conscience, I cannot move till I see my way. I am praying to be delivered from a carnal system, but my way out seems at present hedged up.

Let me have your prayers that I may see my way clearly, and neither run before I am called out, nor stay after I hear the warning voice. I can't move just when and as I please, but must wait for the pillar and the cloud.

Give my Christian regards to ——, and believe me to be,
Yours affectionately, in Jesus Christ,
J. C. P.

(7)

To William Tiptaft.

Stadhampton, Oct. 1, 1834.

My dear Tiptaft,—I have been kept from writing to you, sometimes from occupation, sometimes from sloth, and sometimes from the feeling that I could write nothing profitable. Every day, indeed, I seem to see more and more that I have little or no grace. And at these times, when I can draw to the throne of grace and ask the Lord to work in and upon my soul, I seem to have less grace than ever. At such times, and I have been occasionally favoured with a little earnestness, I feel everything in me so shallow, so unreal, so little like the mighty work of the Spirit on the soul. The fountains of the great deep are not broken up, and all my religion seems to consist in a little natural light, just as I know any point of history or language. These are my best seasons, at least in private, when, feeling I have no grace or religion, I ask the Lord to work on my soul. At other times, what with the workings of infidelity, unbelief, carelessness, pride, evil temper, and conceit, with all the silly, foolish, filthy, lustful imaginations which crowd in one upon another, my soul seems like the great deep, " without form and void " (in the original, " confusion and emptiness "), before the word of God said " Let there be light." In my ministry, if I am shut up and cannot come forth, I care more for my own failure than the want of profit to the people. And if I am favoured with a little liberty, my proud heart takes all the glory, and gives none to God. So that what can you expect profitable to read from so silly and graceless, so earthly and carnal, a creature as I am ? When I am in my right mind I would gladly feel something—law or gospel, conviction or consolations, cries or praises ; anything of God would seem better than my present dark, blind, earthly, graceless state. I feel I shall run on so to perdition, unless sovereign grace interpose, and lift me up out of this fearful state. And yet at times only do I feel this, and at other times am as careless as if all was a fable from beginning to end. And then infidelity, with all its subtle doubts and questions, will creep in, and turn my prayers into mockeries. Your heart, I dare say, will echo all this ; but what evidence is that to me ? I shall perish in my carnal state unless sovereign grace step in ; and from that nothing can shake me. But I will not detail any more of my complaints. Only picture to yourself the proudest, hardest, most unbelieving and carnal person you can, and you have my picture.

I enjoy the Pinnells being so near very much. I have seen them quite often, and we always speak on the best things.

I scarcely expected by this time to have been curate here, as the bishop wrote to me about five weeks ago, reprimanding me for having had an assistant so long without his permission, and requesting an immediate answer, if I was able or willing to resume the whole duty immediately. I answered him very concisely, neither calling him "My Lord" nor "Right Reverend," and, after having stated a few particulars, said I could not dispense with an assistant. Of course, I expected to hear, in reply, of his intention to remove me ; but no such answer has come, nor indeed any. I committed the affair to the Lord, and as fully expected to be turned out, as you do to return to Abingdon. But here I still am, unmolested.

Clamp and three others walked over here on Lord's-day. I had much conversation with Clamp, and felt my soul refreshed, and found a union with him. On Sunday, 14th ult., I preached at Kennington, and was favoured with some little liberty—at least, as far as I felt myself. G—— was there, who seems awfully departed from the narrow way ; and though I knew nothing of the circumstance at the time, I have been told that the sermon fitted him exactly. But so it is. We can hear so well for others, and never hear for ourselves. Mr. Clowes has been down at Wallingford, and is coming again for three weeks, so that we shall see him. I feel much union with, and regard for him. Jones, Mr. P   's butler, a man of some light, though little grace, heard Gadsby at Gower Street. He described the congregation as excessive, and mentioned, though not to me, an expression of Gadsby : "There is enough filth in the hearts of the people here to make the very walls stink." His subject was Isa. lxiii., but this was said in explaining Zech. iii. 3, 4.

A notion has got abroad that in your new edition of "Gadsby's Hymns" you mean to leave out all the experimental ones adapted to peculiar metres. This I have contradicted.

The Miss G——s are come to live here. They contend for the inward power of religion, and have been led to see P——'s "wood, hay, stubble." Much, however, still remains to come down. They speak of his ministry as powerless, and of his people as dead. He used to call on them about once a week, and never once talked on the things of God. I tried to bring his people to a point, but they seem to me like stones. If we are dark and dead, we know it; but they seem satisfied with their ignorance, and much like the Laodiceans of old. Tysdale preached the charity sermons for me, but did not, I hear, enter very deeply into the mystery of iniquity or the mystery of godliness. S—— has been here lately. I liked him much. He has gone through Lam. iii. since we saw him, and spoke much of his dark paths. I took him to the Pinnells, who were much pleased with him, and were very kind to him. Pray come over soon after you arrive. I fear this letter will only carnalise you.

Kind regards to Mr. and Mrs. Keal.

Yours affectionately in Christ,

J. C. P.

(8)

To Joseph Parry.

Stadhampton, Dec. 11, 1834.

My dear Friend,—Having a favourable opportunity of transmitting you a letter by a private hand, I sit down to write you a few lines.

And, first, let me ask how the things of the Lord are going on in your soul? Are you, like most of us in these parts, saying "My leanness, my leanness! woe unto me!" Are you putting your mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope? Are you crying with Paul of old, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Are you indulged with views of the atoning blood and justifying righteousness of Immanuel? Do you see yourself complete in Him, and is He to you the chiefest of ten thousand and altogether lovely? Or are you buried in your farm and worldly business, and find your soul as hard as a rock and as barren as the sand ? Is your continual experience, " The good that I would I do not, and the evil which I would not that I do " ? And do you go about your farm restless, dissatisfied, weary of self, and yet unable to deliver your soul from darkness, guilt, and wretchedness ?

It is commonly said that a fool can ask questions which a wise man cannot answer, and I find it a great deal easier to ask persons about their souls' experience than to answer them myself. As to my own state, I have but little life, feeling, or power in my soul, and sometimes seem to have none at all, and to care no more for the things of God than a horse. The Bible seems at times to have neither food nor savour in it, and all its mysteries appear shut up from my view. The love of idols fills my heart, and I go a whoring after them all the day. No trifle is too foolish to engage my attention, and take off my thoughts ; and my heart seems to be a sink of infidelity, lust, pride, filth, and obscenity. I am, indeed, kept from outward evil, but so very wicked and vile is my heart that I can throw a stone at nobody.

Rumour brings strange things to our ears respecting Mr.——. I fear he has departed from those things to which he once testified as the very life and power of inward religion and vital godliness. The last account represents him as renouncing baptism. These things must sadly trouble the church at ——, and shake the weak and unestablished, more especially, I believe, his doubt of the reality and power of his own religion. But we are to meet with everything to trouble and perplex us, and what is more trying than when " a standard-bearer fainteth " ? The fall of the officers is much more trying than the fall of the soldiers. " Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered," was true of the great Shepherd, and is to a certain extent of the under-shepherds.

The young gentleman who will convey this either to Allington or, at least, to Devizes is a son of Mr. L., of that place, and has, I trust, in him something good toward the God of Israel. He comes over sometimes to my lectures on a week-night, and seems really desirous after an experimental work upon his soul.

How is your health ? Do you sometimes murmur that you are not so strong and healthy as those around you ; and does pain never depress your spirits, and almost make you say, " I do well to be angry " ? Oh, our hearts are strange compounds of rebellion, peevishness, and perverseness, and full of unkindness and ingratitude. It is well if we are somtimes melted down with a sense of our baseness and unkindness towards the great God who hath so blessed us. My health is always very weak in winter, and I stay pretty much at home; but I find the old corrupt, earth-loving nature as much at work as in the streets of London.

Believe me to be, with Christian regards to Mrs. Parry,
Yours affectionately in Christ Jesus,
J. C. P.

(9)

To Mrs. Rackham.

Stadhampton, Dec. 12, 1834.

My dear Mrs. Rackham,—Having an opportunity of sending a letter to town, I avail myself of it to redeem my promise of writing to you. You are now, doubtless, thoroughly settled in your new abode, and in some measure reconciled to your mode of life. The noise and bustle of Rochester must have seemed very strange to you at first, and I dare say you have often turned in thought to your former quiet abode, where almost the only noise was from the brook that ran by your window. But if faith is in exercise, the hand of God will be seen in this change. And besides, what really matters it where we spend the few years of our pilgrimage below? God is to be found, known, loved, and served as much in all the stirring noise of a town as in the seclusion of a country village. His abode is in the heart, according to His promise, "I will dwell in them, and walk in them" (2 Cor. vi. 16). Thus, also, He speaks in the following passages, to which you can easily refer: Exodus xxix. 45; Leviticus xxvi. 11, 12; Isa. lvii. 15; Zech. ii. 2. But you will say, "Would indeed it were so with me! would I could have the Lord God to dwell in me and walk in me!" If we look to our own fitness, we must say with Solomon of old (1 Kings viii. 27), "Will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee: how much less this house that I have builded?" If God indeed dwells with any soul, it is only through the Son of His love that He does so. As to us, "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, from the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in us, but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores." "As a fountain casteth out her waters" (Jeremiah vi. 7), so we cast out our wickedness. And in our hearts—I speak from experience—there is nothing to be found by nature but pride, unbelief, worldliness, idolatry, infidelity, and sensuality. It is a cage of unclean birds, a nest of scorpions, and often seems to realise John's description of Babylon (Rev. xviii. 2), "the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit." In ourselves, then, we shall ever be vile and sinful, and utterly unfit that Jehovah should dwell in us and walk in us. If we are acceptable to God at all, it is only so far as we are "accepted in the Beloved." The Holy Ghost describes the Church (Ezekiel xvi. 5) as cast out in the open field, to the loathing of her person, in the day that she was born. This is our state by nature. But then He adds, verse 8: "Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love." There is nothing beautiful or comely in man to attract the notice of the Lord. No; on the contrary, he is vile and loathsome in His sight. Love, on the part of God, is free, as He says (Hos. xiv. 4), "I will love them freely." And it is from this free, eternal, sovereign, and unalterable love on His part, and not from any goodness or fitness on theirs, that He spreads His skirt over any poor soul (Ezek. xvi. 8), and enters into covenant with it. But you, or rather your unbelieving heart, will say, "This is not for *me*." But, why not for *you?* Are you not a poor, helpless, sin-burdened creature? Are *you* not without hope, and without help? Well, these are the persons for whom this free salvation is appointed. "He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He hath sent empty away." The wine and milk of the gospel "is without money and without price." If you are weary and heavy laden, Jesus speaks to *you*, and invites *you* to come to Him, Matt. xi. 28. I know well what an unbelieving heart is, and how it always takes part against us, and writes up bitter things; but still I would encourage you "to hope," like the father of the faithful, "against hope"; yea, "to hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter i. 10).

Your trials, doubtless, are many, and I dare say at times you are well-nigh ready to sink under them. But these are the appointed lot of the true children of God. There is a needs-be for all their temptations, crosses, and afflictions, as Peter speaks, 1 Peter i. 6, 7. It gives me pleasure to learn that you have met with a profitable ministry. I hope your present minister will *wear well*. It is one thing to hear profitably for a short time, and another to find a living spring in the minister's soul for a long time together, so as to minister grace and good to the children of God. I should advise you to be slow in forming any connection, either with a church as a member of it, or with professors in general. The best are the hardest to find out, and the most obtrusive are likely to be those whose religion lies more in word than in power. If the Lord sees good He can raise up for your comfort Christian friends, but it is better for a stranger like yourself to wait, than to form acquaintances which you must afterwards give up.

We are going on here much as usual. "My leanness, my leanness, woe unto me!" seems to be the general cry. But, indeed, from the shortness of the days and my liability to cold I have not been able to see much of the people lately. S. Hall seems to be a little revived from her deadness, though she is still full of complaints, and often speaks of you with affection. Indeed, I trust we all remember you with affection, and regret your departure. You mention, I think, in one of your letters, your thanks to me for having taught you much of the evil of your heart. I could wish I had been enabled to have taught you as much or more of Christ. We have two lessons to learn, one full of pain, the other full of pleasure. The first you have been learning, hitherto, in a small measure. The second, which consists in the experimental knowledge of Christ, is that which you have still to learn. And as you learn to know the cleansing, healing, purifying efficacy of His blood, love, grace, and righteousness, so will your heart rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Whatever some may say about experimental ministers building up their people in doubts and fears, I do not believe it is so. They are no enemies to gospel joy, if it be joy of the right sort and obtained in a right way. They are, indeed, enemies, and so may they ever be, to rotten hopes and false assurances; but when they see a heart truly broken and contrite, they love to see it healed by the great Physician. Though I have advised you to be slow to form religious friendships or even acquaintances, still if you can in your vast population find a few humble souls who are experimentally taught sin and salvation, it would be profitable for you sometimes to converse with them. Our cold, dead heart needs refreshing, and "as iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." But seek the Lord in solitude, as David of old; "commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still." The food which Christ gives is called "hidden manna," and the new name written on the white stone no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it (Rev. ii. 17). One spiritual, believing view of Him in secrecy and in solitude is far better than to talk of Him with the tongue, and to hear of Him by the hearing of the ear for a twelvemonth. He will give you such visits as He sees good for you, and I believe you will generally find them before trouble, or in trouble, or after trouble.

Our assemblies at church and lecture have been fairly well attended of late, especially the latter. What we need is to be endued with power from on high. We need showers of blessing to make our hard hearts soft, and our barren hearts fruitful. When He is present with us, all is well ; when He is absent, all is ill. Believe me to be, my dear Mrs. Rackham,

Your sincere and affectionate Friend,

J. C. Philpot.

(10)

To Miss Philpot, Walmer.

Abingdon, March 30, 1835.

My dear Fanny,—The tidings I am about to communicate may concern you more than surprise you. After many trials of mind about it, I have come to the resolution of seceding from the Church of England. In fact I have already resigned my curacy, and shall, in a day or two, give up my Fellowship. I could have wished to have retained my income and independence, but, as I could not do so with a good conscience, I was compelled to give it up. The errors and corruptions of the Church of England are so great and numerous that a man, with a conscience made tender by the blessed Spirit, cannot, after a certain time, remain within her pale. And though I have thus resigned ease and independence, I feel my mind more easy and at liberty, and trust I shall never come to want. My wants are now much less than they used to be, and I trust I shall be content with such slender fare as I may have to expect. Life is short, vain, and transitory ; and if I live in comfort and independence, or in comparative poverty, it will matter little when I lie in my coffin. I trust, if I have health and strength given me, I shall not be a burden to my dear mother. Religion has, indeed, spoiled all my temporal prospects, and, doubtless, made the worldly and carnal think me a fool or mad. But, after all, the approbation of God and the testimony of an honest conscience are better than thousands of gold and silver. My resolution was rather suddenly executed. I had thought of giving my incumbent notice at Lady-day that I should resign the curacy at Midsummer. But it seemed to me inconsistent to tell my incumbent that I could not continue in the curacy but a certain time because I was doing evil. It was as though I had said to him, "Will you allow me to do evil for three months to come?" So I resolved to resign it at once, especially as my assistant promised to undertake it, if required, for the ensuing quarter. I told only two persons of my intention, and having, on Sunday the 22nd, preached in my usual way, I added at the end: "You have heard my voice within these walls for the last time. I intend to resign the curacy and withdraw from the ministry of the Church of England." It was as if a thunderbolt had dropped in the congregation. I did not wish any excitement or manifestation of feeling, and therefore shut it up as quickly as possible. The people were much moved. And the next day some met, and said they could build me a chapel if I would consent to stay. To this, however, I do not feel inclined, though the people wish it much, and say it should not cost me a farthing.

I think, God willing, at present of staying at Stadham till some time in June, and then I shall probably go to a place called Allington, near Devizes, Wilts, where there is a chapel in which I shall preach. The deacon heard me preach about one year and a half ago, and directly he heard I had left the Church he had his horse saddled and rode to Stadham to see me. I happened to be here whither he came. So I have consented to go to Allington for a few weeks.

I am now writing a letter, which I mean to publish, to the provost of Worcester College to resign my Fellowship, containing my reasons for seceding from the Established Church. It will be not more than twopence or threepence. If you should like to have some copies, I would desire the London bookseller to send you a hundred or so. It will be rather strong against the University and the Church of England system.

I trust that my dear mother will not be much hurt at this step I have taken, and I sincerely trust I shall prove no burden to her. The disgrace and the sinking in life I do not think she will mind. The reproach of Christ is greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. At present I can speak nothing as to my future plans.

I may spend some little time with you in Devon, and obtain that rest which I find necessary after preaching, and I trust the good Lord will never leave nor forsake me. He has many ways to provide for His servants, and can make the ravens feed them as Elijah of old. If I had health and strength, I might find support from preaching, or might keep a school. But at present I can say nothing, as I do not see my way as to anything. Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.

I have been staying here, at my friend Tiptaft's, since Saturday, and I shall stay a day or two longer. So that I do not know whether you may not have already written to me. Direct your letter Stadhampton as usual, and tell me what you have settled about going into Devon.

This life is soon passing away, and an eternal state fast coming on. The grand question is, What do we know of Christ by the inward teachings of the Spirit ? What true faith have we in a Saviour's blood and righteousness ? What do we know of His having died for us ?

The time of the post going presses so that I will add no more than that I am, with love to my dear mother and all your circle,

Your affectionate Brother,

J. C. P.

(11)

To the Provost of Worcester College, Oxford.*

Stadhampton, March 28, 1835.

Mr. Provost,—I beg leave to resign the Fellowship of Worcester College, to which I was elected in the year 1826. This step I am compelled to take because I can no longer with a good conscience continue a Minister or a Member of the Established Church.

After great and numerous trials of mind, I am, as I trust, led by the hand of God thus to separate myself from that corrupt and worldly system, called the Church of England. Her errors and corruptions, as well as her utter contrariety to a Gospel Church as revealed in the New Testament, have been for two or three years gradually opening upon my mind. But though I have thus slowly and by degrees obtained light from above to see the Established Church somewhat in her true colours, it is, I confess, only but very lately that the sin of remaining in her has been forcibly laid upon my conscience. I have felt of late that, by continuing one of her ministers, I was upholding what in the sight of the holy JEHOVAH is hateful and loathsome. I have felt that, by standing up in her pulpit, I was sanctioning a system in principle and practice, in root and branches, corrupt before God. I have felt that I was keeping those children of God who sat under my ministry in total darkness as to the nature of a true Gospel Church. I have felt that both I myself, and the spiritual people that attended my ministry, were, in principle and system, mixed up with the ungodly, the Pharisee, the formalist, the worldling, and the hypocrite. And thus, whilst I remained in the Church of England, my principles and my practice, my profession and my conduct, my preaching and my acting, were inconsistent with each other. I was building up with the right hand what I was pulling down with the left. I was contending for the power, whilst the Church of England was maintaining the form. I was, by my preaching, separating the people of God from "the world lying in wickedness," and the Church of England, in her Liturgy and Offices, was huddling together the spiritual and the carnal, the regenerate and the unregenerate, the sheep and the goats. I was contending for regeneration as a supernatural act wrought upon the souls of the elect alone by the Eternal Spirit, and the Church of England was thanking God for regenerating every child that was sprinkled with a little water. True prayer I was representing as the Spirit's work upon the soul, as the groanings of a burdened heart, as the pouring out of a broken spirit, as the cry of a child to his heavenly Father, as the hungering and thirsting of a soul that panted after God. The Church of England tied me down to cold, hackneyed, wearisome forms, in which I prayed for the Royal Family, the Parliament, the Bishops, and all sorts and conditions of men, with scarcely one petition that the Spirit would indite in a regenerate heart. My soul was pained and burdened within me at hearing the wicked and the careless take into their lips the sweet petitions of David in the Psalms. I heard around me those who I knew from their life and conversation had never for a moment spiritually felt the pangs of a wounded conscience, say, "I stick fast in the deep mire where no ground is; I am come into deep waters, so that the floods run over me." I heard those who never desired or longed after anything but the gratification of their own lusts and covetousness, repeat aloud, "Like as the hart desireth the water-brooks, so longeth my soul after thee, O God." Those that were dressed up in all the colours of the rainbow, I heard saying, "As for me, I am poor and needy." Graceless men who had never felt a drop of the Spirit's teachings, and who out of the Church swore, jeered, and scoffed, would cry in my hearing, "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me." Adulterers and adulteresses repeated aloud, "I will wash my hands in innocency, and so will I go to Thine altar." Whilst the self-righteous Pharisee would sound in my ears, "I will go forth in the strength of the Lord God, and will make mention of Thy righteousness only." Thus the gracious and blessed experience of God's saints was mocked and trampled upon, and the fervent prayers and breathings of the Spirit in contrite souls were profaned by the ungodly taking them into their unhallowed lips. And all this I was conscious was not a casual occurrence, or such as arose from the unsuggested will of individuals, but was the deliberate principle and system of the Church of England. I saw it was so by her teaching every child to say he was made in his baptism "a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of Heaven." I saw it was so by that system of responses which she enjoins upon all the congregation to make, and again and again has my soul been burdened at hearing the wicked little children around me mock God by shouting out the responses, as they had been systematically trained to do by ignorant ministers, parents, school-masters and school-mistresses. Being for the last three years a hearer and not a reader of the Liturgy, I have been compelled at times to close my ears with both my hands, that I might not hear the mechanical cries of the children, one of whose responses they always thus worded, "We have left undone those things which we ought *not* to have done." I have groaned within me at hearing the ungodly around me thus mock God, and so far was I from joining in the dead and spiritless forms of the Prayer Book, that I could only secretly pray, "Lord, deliver me from this worldly and unholy system." Every dull and dry prayer seemed to lay a fresh lump of ice on my heart, and when I got into the pulpit, nothing but the hand of God, to whom I cried for help, could take off that deadness and barrenness which these wearisome forms had, in a great measure, laid upon me. At times, too, when I viewed the gettings up and sittings down, the bowings, the turnings to the East, the kneeling in this place and the standing in that, and the whole routine of that "bodily service" wherewith the blessed JEHOVAH was mocked, I could not but look on the whole as a few degrees only removed from the mummery of a Popish mass-house.

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* The footnotes to this Letter were added before publication.

But though I felt, and at times could groan beneath the wretched formality of the Church of England, I was from two motives chiefly kept within her. One was, that I desired to be useful to the children of God in a dark neighbourhood, with whom I had been connected for nearly seven years, and of whom some professed to derive profit from my ministry. The other was altogether carnal, and, though hiding itself in the secret recesses of my heart and therefore unperceived, was doubtless of much weight with me. This was the desire of retaining that independence which my Fellowship secured. My heart, I freely confess, has often sunk within me at the prospect of my already weak health terminating in confirmed illness, with poverty and want staring me in the face. I was also praying for an opening from the Lord to show me my path clearly, as, though I was determined neither to accept preferment, nor take another Curacy, I was unwilling to throw up my ministry until the death of the very aged Incumbent.* Lately, however, I have been brought to see "that I must not do evil that good may come," and that if my conscience was fully convinced of the sin of remaining in the Church of England, no clearer or more direct intimation of the will of God was needed. Thus have I laid open the inward workings of my heart, and the experience through which I have been led, in order to show that the resignation of my Fellowship and Curacy, and secession from the Church of England, is no sudden and hasty step, but the gradual and deliberate conviction of my soul.

But besides these particular evils under which I especially "groaned, being burdened," as being brought into continual contact with them, I have felt that by continuing in the Establishment I sanction and uphold every other corruption that is mixed up with so worldly a system. Thus I must sanction the union of Church and State: the putting of the King in the place of Christ as Head of the Church ; the luxury and pomp of the bishops ; the giving away of livings for electioneering purposes ; the heaping of preferment by ungodly parents on ungodly children ; the system of tithes ;* the principle and practice of Ecclesiastical Courts ; the manufacturing of ministers by the gross at the Bishop's ordinations, and all that mass of evil which has sprung out of a worldly and wealthy Establishment. When Christ has bidden me "call no man Father on earth," and not to be called myself "Rabbi," and "Master," and consequently by no title distinctive of priesthood or ministerial office, I must sanction the decking out of His professed ministers with the trappings of Antichrist, such proud titles, I mean, as Reverend, Very Reverend, Right Reverend, Most Reverend, Father in God, My Lord, Your Grace, and the like. As a minister of the Establishment I must also sanction that abominable traffic in livings whereby "the souls of men" are bought and "sold" (an especial mark of Babylon, Rev. xviii. 13), and knocked down to the highest bidder by the auctioneer's hammer. Thus the whole system, in its root, stem, and branches, manifests itself to a renewed and spiritual mind as part and parcel of that Antichrist and Babylon which the Lord foreshowed His servants should arise, and from which He calls them to come out and be separate.

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* He died in less than six weeks after the resignation of my Curacy.

As a member, too, of the University, and Fellow of a College, I am unavoidably and necessarily mixed up with many evils, which I am convinced are equally hateful to God. Thus, in this capacity, I must sanction the whole principle of a University, as needful to qualify men to become ministers of Jesus Christ. But who that knows experimentally the sovereignty of JEHOVAH in choosing His ministers will not feel it to be awful presumption thus to train up unregenerate men to stand forth in His holy name? The call to the ministry is as sovereign as the call by grace. And JEHOVAH will take the tinker from his barrow, and the cobbler from his stall, and send them to preach His word, as he took Elisha from the plough, and Amos from "gathering sycamore fruit." By continuing, therefore, a member of the University I tacitly set aside the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, which can alone qualify a man for the ministry, and substitute a knowledge of Latin and Greek, and such mere letter-learning as is called Divinity. But by doing this I necessarily reject as ministers some of God's most eminent and deeply-taught servants, as Bunyan, Hart, and Huntington; and exalt in their room unregenerate men, who were never taught a single truth by the Eternal Spirit. And as, by continuing a member of the University, I sanction its principle, so in some measure do I sanction its practice. What that practice is, let those testify who have passed through the various stages of Undergraduate, Bachelor, and Master of Arts. But where in all that practice do I see the marks of Christ, or "the footsteps of His flock?" Can they be traced in the drawing- and dining-rooms of the Heads of Houses? in the Common-rooms of the Fellows? in the breakfasts, wine-parties, and suppers of the Undergraduates? What, I would ask, is usually heard in the latter but shouting, and singing of unclean songs, or conversation on the boat-race, the steeple-chase, or the fox-hunt? and what is commonly heard in the former but the news and politics of the day, and all such trifling, and sometimes even unseemly conversation, as is the mark of the soul that is "dead in sins"? Where amongst all these, either professed ministers of Jesus Christ or such as are training to be so, is the name of the Saviour, or the voice of prayer heard? If anywhere, it is amongst a few despised Undergraduates, who have enough religion to see the open evils around them, but not enough grace or faith to separate from the system altogether.

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* I cannot but wonder how men who profess spiritual religion, and call themselves Evangelical ministers, can take tithes from carnal and ungodly farmers; nay, as I have known some do, screw them up to the highest pitch, and even employ legal means to enforce their payment. Whilst others of the same name and pretension exact tithes from gardens watered by the sweat of the labourer, and enforce burial and similar fees from the poor, when they themselves ride about in their carriages and phaetons. Of this I am confident, that they are not taught thus to act by the Blessed Spirit, who guides the regenerate into all truth, makes the conscience tender, and gives bowels of compassion towards the poor and needy. The New Testament authorises no other payment to ministers but free and voluntary offerings; and thus all tithes, fees, and dues are part of that "mystery of iniquity" of which Babylon, the mother of harlots, is the head.

And who that knows the University will not allow the following to be a faint sketch of the course run by most of her children? Initiated in boyhood in wickedness at one of the public schools, those dens of iniquity, or at a private school, in some cases but a shade better and in others worse, the youthful aspirant to the ministry removes to College, where, having run a career of vanity and sin for three years, he obtains his degree. Fortified with this, and his College testimonials, procured without difficulty except by the very notoriously immoral, and those who have shown some symptoms of spiritual religion, he presents himself to the Bishop for ordination. Examined by the Bishop's Chaplain on a few common-place topics of divinity, and approved, he is ordained amidst a heap of other candidates, without one question of a spiritual nature, one inquiry as to his own conversion to God, or one serious expostulation as to his motives and qualifications for so awful a work. The cold heartlessness and technical formality usually displayed by Bishop, Chaplain, Archdeacon, and Registrar, with the carelessness and levity of most of the candidates, can never be forgotten by one whose heart God has touched, and who has witnessed the solemn mockery of a half-yearly ordination.

But further, as a Fellow of a College, I am connected with a body of men, who, however amiable and learned they may be (and if I forget the kindness of some of them I should be ungrateful indeed), are yet ignorant of Jesus Christ. Their acts as a body I am a party to, and indirectly, if not directly, sanction. Thus I help to give away college livings to unregenerate men, though I may know in my own conscience that they are not even called by grace, much less to the work of the ministry. I am a party also to giving testimonials indiscriminately of good life and conduct to be presented to the Bishop by the candidates for ordination (the document requiring the college seal), as well as to the electing of Fellows and Scholars for their classical attainments, and thus thrusting them into the ministry, and, in a word, to the whole system of education pursued, which, as a means of qualifying men to be ministers, I believe to be hateful to God. In short, I am mixed up with a society of men whose life and conduct, however amiable, moral, and honourable, are not those of "the poor and afflicted" family of God. No other way, then, have I to escape these evils, to "keep myself pure, and not to be partaker of other men's sins," than by fleeing out of Babylon.

Lastly, I secede from the Church of England because I can find in her scarce one mark of a true church. She tramples upon one ordinance of Christ by sprinkling infants, and calling it regeneration (the word of God allowing no other than the baptism of believers, and that by immersion), and profanes the other by permitting the ungodly to participate. The true Church is despised, but *she* is honoured. The true Church is persecuted, but *she* is a persecutor. The true Church is chosen out of the world, but *she* is part and parcel of it. The true Church consists only of the regenerate, but *she* embraces in her universal arms all the drunkards, liars, thieves, and immoral characters of the land. She christens them, she confirms them, she marries them, she buries them. And she pronounces of all for whom she executes these offices, that they are *regenerate*,* that "*all their sins are forgiven them*,"† that they are "*the servants of God*."‡ If perchance on a dying bed any doubts and convictions should arise that all is not right for eternity, she sends her minister to visit them, and "*to absolve them from all their sins*."§ And having thus lulled their fears, and deluded them to die in peace, she quiets the rising doubts of their friends at the mouth of the grave, by assuring them that "this our brother is delivered out of the miseries of this sinful world," and is "committed to the dust in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life."‖ Oh! could the awful veil that hides eternity be for a moment lifted up, we should see that thousands, whom the Church of England is blessing, God is cursing, and that tens of thousands whom she is asserting to be "in joy and felicity," are at that moment "lifting up their eyes in hell, being in torment." And while she thus speaks peace and comfort to all that will call her Mother, although unregenerate and dead in sins, she in her canons excommunicates and pronounces "guilty of wicked error" all that are enlightened of the Spirit to declare she is not a true church, and separate from her communion. What is this but to remove the ancient landmarks of truth and error; "to call evil good, and good evil; to put darkness for light, and light for darkness, bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!" At the same time, she shuts up and seals the mouth of all her ministers, and ties them down to say what she says, and to deny what she denies, by compelling them to "give their unfeigned assent and consent to all and everything contained and prescribed in and by the

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* Baptismal Service.

† Confirmation Service.

‡ Marriage Service.

§ See the Popish Form of Absolution in "The Visitation of the Sick."

‖ Burial Service.

Common Prayer Book," and to promise that they will "conform to the Liturgy as by law established." And if any of them are haply taught of God the things of Christ in their own souls, and having grace and faithfulness to preach what they have tasted, felt, and handled, contradict in the pulpit what they assert in the desk, they are frowned on by Bishops, despised by the Clergy around them, and hated by all the worldly part of their parish, until at length the powerful convictions of an enlightened conscience force them to deliver their souls by fleeing out of Babylon.

But I am told that the Church of England is the only true church; that she derives her sacraments and ministers in a direct, uninterrupted line from the apostles, and that to secede from her is to be guilty of schism. But where are the outward marks of this only true church? Where are the "signs" of these successors of the apostles, as "wrought amongst us in all patience, in signs and wonders, and mighty deeds"? (2 Cor. xii. 12). Are they to be found in lordly Bishops, proud and pampered Dignitaries, fox-hunting, shooting, dancing, and card-playing Clergy? Or are they to be discovered in those mere moral and outwardly decent ministers, who, after their solemn vow "to lay aside the study of the world and the flesh," busy themselves in classics, mathematics, history, modern languages, natural philosophy, divinity, and everything and anything but to know Christ in their own souls? Where are the gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost visible in men, who, not being able to utter a word but what is written down, either copy their sermons from books, or forge out of their own heads a weekly lecture on stale morality? Where are the seals of their commission, whereby they "approve themselves as ministers of God, by pureness, by knowledge, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left"? (2 Cor. vi. 6, 7).

But, perhaps, these outward marks of the successors of the apostles may be discovered in the Evangelical Clergy, by some esteemed so highly. What are these, however, as a body, now generally doing but making common cause with the worldly clergy, whom in their hearts they consider to be neither Christians nor ministers, to uphold an unholy system? They are for the most part compounding their sermons out of Simeon's dry and marrowless "Skeletons,"* looking out for preferment, buying and selling livings, training up their unregenerate sons for the ministry, and "putting them into the priest's office that they may eat a piece of bread." Who amongst them can give a clear and decisive account of his call by grace, or of his call to the ministry? What description can they give of the entrance of the law into their conscience, bringing with it guilt, condemnation, and death, and of a deliverance by the inward revelation of Christ and the application of the "blood of sprinkling"? The greater part are violently opposed to the fundamental doctrines of unconditional election, particular redemption, imputed righteousness, and man's helplessness. And those who do set forth the doctrines of free and sovereign grace preach them with such dryness and deadness as clearly show that they were never wrought into their experience by the blessed Spirit. Under their ministry the spiritual children of God will not sit; for knowing little or nothing of the work of regeneration, and the trials, temptations, or consolations of the people of Christ, they cannot approve themselves to the consciences of the spiritual, either as called by grace or as sent to preach the gospel.

Thus, with perhaps a few and rare exceptions, the Clergy of the Church of England, whether Orthodox or Evangelical, correspond to that description given by the Holy Ghost, Micah iii. 11: "The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money, yet will they lean upon the LORD, and say, Is not the LORD among us? none evil can come upon us." And need we wonder, if as is the priest, so is the people? The congregation of the High church, or *Orthodox* clergy, as they proudly call themselves, consists, with possibly a few exceptions, of none but open sinners, self-righteous pharisees, and dead formalists. In this "congregation of the dead," the blind lead the blind, and all their weekly confessions, absolutions, prayers, praises, services, and sacraments are, as they will one day find, but one continual mockery of the blessed God, who requires of His worshippers that they "should worship Him in spirit and in truth." Of those who sit under the ministry of the Evangelical clergy, the greater part in no wise differ from "the congregation of the dead" described above, being attracted thither by the superstitious charm of the *Parish Church.* Of the remaining part, there may be a few seeking souls who range over these barren heaths, until fairly driven from them by starvation, or brought off by tasting the green pastures and still waters of gospel grace under an experimental minister. The rest are mere formalists, with an evangelical creed in their heads, but without any grace in their hearts; or, if the minister be a high Calvinist, such "twice dead" doctrinal professors as never felt the plague of their own hearts, never had their consciences ploughed up by the law, never loathed themselves in their own sight, and were never "plunged in the ditch till their own clothes abhorred them." Humble, lowly, contrite souls, who are deeply acquainted with the workings of grace and of corruption, whose consciences have been made tender, and who have landmarks of the dealings of God with them, cannot long continue where they have fellowship with neither minister nor people. And, indeed, so opposed is the whole principle and practice of the Church of England to the work of grace upon the souls of the elect, and "to simplicity and godly sincerity," that a minister, who is not a hypocrite or a formalist, must, when he has reached a certain point in Christian experience, either flee out of her or awfully sin against the convictions of his own conscience. He may remain in her as a presumptuous dead Calvinist; he may take the highest tone of doctrine, and preach Sunday after Sunday about assurance of personal salvation; but if once he describe the work of the Spirit on the soul he must, at a certain point, either come out of her or, by remaining contentedly within her pale, manifest himself a hypocrite in experience, of all hypocrites and of all hypocrisies the most deceiving and the most awful. Can a man, for instance, who has known the work of regeneration in his own soul, and whose conscience is made tender by the blessed Spirit, go on long to lie unto God by thanking Him for regenerating infants? Can he who has been sprinkled with the blood of Christ, and been fed with His flesh, continue long to give the elements of His body and blood to the unbeliever, the self-righteous, and the ungodly? Can he who has tasted the covenant of grace, and experimentally entered into the everlasting distinction between the sheep and the goats, go on long to mock God by declaring at the grave's mouth of every departed unbeliever, swearer, and drunkard, that he is a "brother," and is "taken to be with God"? Notions in the head, however correct, doctrines, however high, a presumptuous confidence of salvation, however loud and lofty, may suffer a man thus to trifle with the living JEHOVAH. But a tender conscience, a godly fear, and a trembling sense of God's holiness and majesty, such as the blessed Spirit works in the soul, must sooner or later bring a man out of this awful mockery.

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* These said "Skeletons" of Mr. Simeon, of Cambridge, are sketches of sermons from Genesis to Revelation, properly divided and subdivided, to be filled up according to the ability of the preacher. On these *patent crutches* most of the evangelical ministers walk. But how little the inventor, and the users of such miserable devices, seem to reflect that the Lord "hates robbery for burnt-offering," and "is against those prophets that steal their words every one from his neighbour!"

From this worldly and unholy system I now secede; and blessed be the name of God Most High, who has poured light on my eyes to see these abominations, and given me, I trust, a small portion of that faith of Moses whereby "he was willing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." For sooner far would I die in a workhouse, under the sweet shinings-in of the eternal Comforter, and His testimony to my conscience that I am born of God, than live and die in ease and independence, without following Jesus in that path of trial and suffering which alone leads to eternal life.

But my long relationship with yourself, as Head of Worcester College, and with my brother Fellows, will not allow me thus to dissolve my connexion with you without faithfully warning both you and them of your present state before God. What marks, then, are there in you, or them, of that new birth, without which none can enter the kingdom of heaven? What signs have you, or they, of a broken and contrite spirit? What marks of "the faith of God's elect"? What inward discoveries have you, or they, had of the blood and righteousness of Christ? What testimony of the blessed Spirit to the pardon of your sins, and to your adoption into the family of God? "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His," though a sound classic, an acute mathematician, or a learned divine. And to have been professed ministers of Jesus Christ will only add to your condemnation, if you and they live and die in your present state of unbelief and unregeneracy.

I am weak and ignorant, full of sin and compassed with infirmity, but I bless God that He has in some measure shown me the power of eternal things, and by free and sovereign grace stopped me in that career of vanity and sin in which, to all outward appearance, I was fast hurrying down to the chambers of death.

With all due respect to you as Provost of Worcester College, I beg leave to subscribe myself,

Yours faithfully,
J. C. Philpot.

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(12)

To Joseph Parry.

Abingdon, June 3, 1835.

My dear Friend,—To avoid all mistake, I think it best to inform you of my intended movements. I hope, then, if the Lord will, to leave Abingdon to-morrow morning for Newbury. I shall sleep there (God willing), at Mrs. Merrewether's, where there will probably be gathered together a few friends to hear a few words as to the way of salvation and the work of grace upon the heart. The next day (Friday) I intend, if the Lord will, to leave for Marlborough, where I shall expect to find you, or someone from you. I shall come by the Newbury coach, and get down where it stops, and stay there until I see or hear something of you. I am still very weak, and liable to take cold, and indeed have been unwell for three or four months.

I hope and pray that I may not come amongst you in vain. How far our views and principles may coincide, I know not; but I shall, God enabling me, faithfully declare what I feel and believe to be true without fearing man. I am on the dark side of things, and more for confusion, guilt, and bondage than liberty, assurance, and freedom. Not that I object to the *realities* of these latter, but to their *counterfeits* so universally current. Neither do I wish to preach to a people who will not or cannot receive me and my doctrine. I come, therefore, to you, as a friend, for a few days, or a few Sundays, just as I and the church suit one another. If I do not suit them, I should be glad to leave Allington after the first Lord's-day. If they can hear me comfortably and profitably, I would not mind staying three or four. But I wish it to be understood that I come to see you as a personal friend, and only to preach as a friend staying with you—as a wayfaring man that tarrieth for a night. Expect but little from me, and you will be less disappointed, as I am a very poor creature in body and soul.

If you could borrow something less open than a gig for me on Friday—such as a light covered cart—it might suit me better than a more exposed conveyance, though I believe your gig has a head.

With Christian regards to Mrs. Parry, and all that love the truth at Allington,

Believe me to be,
Yours affectionately,
J. C. P.

(13)

To Miss Philpot.

Allington, Devizes, June 17, 1835.

My dear Fanny,—As I promised to write to you when I was somewhat settled here, I sit down to fulfil my promise.

I came here Friday, June 5, from Newbury, whither I had come from Abingdon the day preceding. I was engaged to speak in the room of a Christian lady at Newbury, but as it was feared it would not be sufficient to hold all that were expected, she procured a chapel for me to preach in. This was amongst the General Baptists, who are Arminians in sentiment. When I, therefore, began to open up that God had a chosen and peculiar people, the whole place seemed in commotion. One man called aloud, "This doctrine won't do for me," and started out, and was instantly followed by five or six others. I was not, however, daunted by this, but went on to state the truth with such measure of boldness and faithfulness as was given me. Some of my friends in the chapel thought that the people would have molested me, but no one offered to injure me by word or action, and I came safe out from among them. The next day I came by one of the Bath coaches to Marlborough, where my friend Mr. Parry met me, and brought me safely here. I have already preached here five times, *i.e.*, twice on two Lord's-days, and once in the week besides.

My services have been requested at Reading about the middle of next month for one Lord's-day, but the time is not exactly fixed; on that must depend a good deal when I shall come into Kent. Indeed, for some reasons, I would rather not come to Walmer at all this year. For, first, there is a great desire here that I should stay at Allington as long as I can. This is a neighbourhood remarkably favoured, and a great spirit of hearing abroad. It was supposed that there were 250 persons in the little chapel last Lord's-day in the afternoon, some of whom had come seven miles' distance, and others distances varying from one to five or six miles. There are also many of the children of God in this vicinity, who would gather under the banner of truth if faithfully displayed. I am very comfortable at Mr. Parry's; he is a very large farmer, and has a wife and four children. He is a very good and gracious man, and is the deacon and, in fact, the sole support of the cause of God in the village. He has a very great desire that I should settle here awhile, as they are quite destitute of a minister. But I am in a strait betwixt two, having, for some reasons, a wish to return to Stadham, and yet finding difficulties in the way. I am praying for the Lord to guide me, as I scarce know what to do, or which way to take.

I can say I do not at all regret leaving the Church of England, and feel quite satisfied and comfortable at having done so. My conscience is now at ease, which it was not whilst I was entangled in so carnal a system, and at times I see more of its awful mockery and the dreadful lies which are solemnly told the blessed JEHOVAH by His professed ministers. I do not fear but that the Lord will take care of me and, indeed, have no reason to think otherwise as long as He gives me sufficient health and strength to preach. There are many places which would be glad enough to have me were I willing to go.

My letters to the Provost, &c., have had a great sale, but are now declining. They have, I believe, reached the fourth edition. Though the main sale may be over, yet straggling copies will yet sell for some time.

I heard the other day from Wise, the auctioneer, of my books. The two cases had arrived from London; the sale was to commence on the 15th of this month, and to last three days. I hope they will go off well. Wise said in his letter that a great many persons had been to see them, and he thought the sale would excite some interest.

I hope Mary Ann and the little boy are now doing well; if they go to Plymouth in the beginning of July, I fear I shall not see them. I do sincerely hope that I may be able to run down into Kent for a few weeks, as such a change and rest is good for my health : but I feel that I must go on working while it is day. The harvest is plenteous, but the labourers are few. It is a great thing to be engaged in the work of the Lord of hosts, and the desire of carnal ease and rest must be laid aside by him who would endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. . . .

There is no greater inheritance than to be a son or daughter of the Lord Almighty (2 Cor. vi. 18). Gold and silver cannot purchase this ; for Jehovah has redeemed His Church and people, not with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot (1 Peter i. 18, 19). To have an interest in the covenant love of the Father, the redeeming blood of the Son, and the sanctifying operation of the Holy Spirit, is worth a million of worlds. Without such an interest we must be eternally miserable, and with it eternally happy. This was all David's salvation and all his desire (2 Sam. xxiii.).

Write soon, as I don't know when I shall be leaving this, and tell me your plans, and how you all are. My affectionate love to my dear mother, Mary Ann, and Augustus, and accept the same from,

Your affectionate Brother,
J. C. P.

(14)

To Joseph Parry.

Exeter, August 29, 1835.

My dear Friend,—My present intention is to leave this place on Wednesday next, September 2, for Bath (God willing), where I mean to sleep, and leave next day for Devizes, where I shall hope to meet you, or Mr. Tuckwell if you are not well, with the gig. I could not trouble you to come to Bath, as there are coaches through Devizes, and the weather is uncertain. You speak of the baptising. But I have many doubts and fears respecting it. First, I feel my miserable unbelief, sinfulness, hardness of heart, backslidings, ignorance of Christ, and manifold corruptions as most powerful obstacles in the way. Secondly, my poor, weak, shattered, tottering, cold-catching body fills me with many apprehensions. But I trust if I saw Jesus one side of the water I should venture through. I seem now to have missed the most favourable opportunity during the warm weather we have just had. But I would add that, if I am to go through the ordinance this year, it must not be pushed into the autumn. September 13 is the latest Sunday I could submit to it, and I do assure you I shall be very thankful to escape with a cold. I asked Mr. Warburton to baptise me if I should go through the ordinance, and should not wish any other. If, then, he is able to come to Allington on September 13th, I would, the blessed Lord enabling me, follow the example of the great Head of the Church, in passing through the waters of Jordan. You should, perhaps, write immediately to Mr. Warburton to invite him for that purpose, and to preach as well, as I could not think of preaching that day. I hope, however, the church will understand I should not at all alter the relation in which I proposed to stand to them. I should still be no other than a Supply, willing to go or stay as we mutually suited each other. I am daily more and more sensible of the desperate wickedness of my deceitful heart, and my miserable ruined state as a sinner by nature and by practice. I feel utterly unworthy of the name of a Christian, and to be ranked among the followers of the Lamb. And I have no wish to palm myself upon any Church, any minister, or any Christian, as though I were anything. I am willing to take a low place; and whoever doubts my Christianity, only does what I do myself continually. Now that you are likely to see more of me, you will be sure to find out more infirmities and failings, both as a man and as a minister, than you have as yet, perhaps, discovered. A few weeks is too short a period to know a man. There is in most, and I am sure there is so in myself, much waywardness, selfishness, obstinacy, and evil temper, which is not at first developed. Persons, from a short and imperfect acquaintance, expect great things, which subsequent intercourse does not realise. And many are foolishly apt to imagine a minister is more spiritual than any one else, and in conversation is more profitable. As to myself, I disclaim any such remnant of priestcraft. I am very carnal, very proud, very foolish in imagination, very slothful, very worldly, dark, stupid, blind, unbelieving, and ignorant. I cannot but confess that I have a dreadfully corrupt old man, a strange compound, a sad motley mixture of all the most hateful and abominable vices, that rise up within me, and face me at every turn. So that, instead of expecting a profitable and spiritual companion for your fireside, you must make up your mind for a poor invalid, shrinking from every breeze, and a proud, presumptuous, hardened creature, that can neither be softened by mercies, nor humbled by trials. But this I say, as I did once before, I wish to saddle myself on nobody. I wish to be independent of the deacons and members of the church, male and female ; I mean so as not to flatter or please them. If they don't like me, or are not satisfied with my doctrine, experience, or practice, let them tell me so at once, and I will leave by the first coach. Or if they can't hear me to profit, and wish a more gracious and gifted man, I will give up the pulpit at the first warning. I don't want the canting speeches and honeyed looks of hypocrites and dead professors, whether Calvinists or Arminians. My desire is to feed the Church of God which He hath purchased with His own blood. Remember me affectionately to Mr. T., Mrs. C., your good lady, and all the church. If I lift up the sword, recollect it must go through friend and foe that are not on the Lord's side, and may He keep me from sparing any but those whom He loves as the apple of His eye.

Yours affectionately, in the best of causes and the service of the best of Masters,

J. C. P.

(15)

TO JAMES BROOKLAND, STADHAMPTON.

Allington, Sept. 23, 1835.

My dear Brookland,*—Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God the Father, and His Son Jesus Christ the Lord.

I have been desirous for some time past to write to you, that those who profess to love and feel the power of experimental truth in Stadham and its neighbourhood may not think I have totally forgotten them : though I have been taken from you in presence, I trust not altogether in heart. And I shall rejoice to hear that you, who have separated yourselves from a carnal and corrupt system, are walking in truth, from tasting, feeling, and handling the sweetness and power of it in your own souls.

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* James Brookland died at Stadhampton, Jan. 28th, 1855, aged 55.

I find the Lord daily to me far better than I could in any way anticipate. He has raised up for me kind friends, with whom I feel a spiritual union, given me a measure of acceptance among His people, and supplied my dark, foolish, ignorant, barren soul from time to time with thoughts, words, and feelings when I stand up in His name. But my cold, ungrateful, proud, presumptuous, deceitful, and rebellious heart only repays Him with deadness and coldness, worldliness, carelessness, sin, and corruption. Thus, I am driven to salvation by free sovereign grace as my only hope, and see in myself at times so few marks of grace, and so many of unbelief and carnality, that I feel I must be singled out as an especial object of discriminating mercy, if saved at all. Thus, I am taught that profession, knowledge, consistency, creature strivings, fleshly righteousness, and all the other trumpery of nature's forging, are useless and vain. I am brought to contend for the immediate, powerful, and supernatural work of the blessed Spirit on the soul. I am daily more and more confirmed in my views of the profession of the day, and can find but few in whom I can trace the powerful operations of the Holy Ghost. Broken hearts, contrite spirits, emptied, stripped, and humbled souls, I very rarely meet with ; and thus I am led to insist much on the need of the mouth being put into the dust, and of being plunged into the ditch until our own clothes abhor us. But all this stripping and humbling work, I am led to see and feel, is of sovereign grace in the person, in the manner, in the time, in the means, and in the circumstances. I am brought to see and feel that it " is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy ;" that His elect family are the " clay, and He the potter " ; and that He works in them to will and to do of His good pleasure ; and thus I am brought to see these things, not as dry, dead doctrines, but as truths of inward and feeling experience ; and I am convinced that, however painful the lesson is, there is no other way of learning truth but by a feeling sense of our deep need of it, and of its precious suitability to our lost and helpless condition. This also teaches me the shallowness and emptiness of professors and the religion of the day, and that, for want of being stripped, emptied, and wounded, they are mistaking husks for bread, and chaff for wheat, dross for gold, and the delusions of Satan for the truth of God. Your eyes and those of my dear friends in the neighbourhood are, I trust, open to see these things; and if you have learned this in the school of experience, and not in your own judgment only, you have reason to bless God who has thus kept you from the delusions of the day.

About a week back I was privileged to follow the dear Lord through the waters of baptism, and never more sensibly felt my unworthiness than on that day. He was pleased to keep me from taking the least cold, to give me more confidence to step into His watery grave than I could have expected from my many bodily and spiritual temptations and exercises. Mr. Warburton preached, and baptised me with the greatest solemnity, unction, and affection.

I am glad to hear that Mr. Doe is enabled to come amongst you, and that there is some prospect of having a place of worship erected where truth may be preached. I am daily more and more convinced that nothing is of the least avail but experimental realities, made known unto the soul by the unction and manifestation of the blessed Spirit. All forms, opinions, rites, ceremonies, and notions to me are nothing, and worse than nothing; they are the husks which the swine eat, not the food of the living soul. To have the heart deeply penetrated and possessed with the fear of Jehovah, to be melted and filled with a sweet sense of dying love and atoning blood, to have the affections warmed, and drawn forth under the anointings of the eternal Comforter, this is the only religion that can suit or satisfy a regenerate soul. But, alas! how dark, stupid, lifeless, trifling, and unfeeling are our hearts! Every little trifle, every lustful desire, every covetous wish, every rising anger, every emotion of pride, carries the soul away at once, and makes it more like a devil than a saint; and then guilt, doubts, and fears set in like a flood, and hide from the soul all hope or evidence of grace. But, after all, "by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of our spirit"; by these trials and temptations, these ups and downs, we are experimentally taught to know ourselves and the wondrous riches of electing love, redeeming blood, justifying righteousness, quickening, upholding, and renewing grace; self falls lower and lower, and a triune Jehovah rises higher and higher in our eyes. Self is loathed, and Jesus loved; self is taught its weakness, foolishness, and sinfulness; and the strength, wisdom, and love of Jesus glorified. And thus, the sovereignty of divine grace, the emptiness of professors, the folly of free will, the deceitfulness and wickedness of the heart, the reality of vital godliness, and the blessedness of a free salvation are taught experimentally, and wrought into our souls as eternal realities.

I am daily made more and more sensible of my unfitness for the work of the ministry ; but the Lord is pleased sometimes to favour me with some liberty and enlargement of soul in contending for experimental truth ; and glad should I be to be assured that I did not spend my strength for naught and in vain at Stadham, but that the Lord did indeed work by me to quicken and edify the souls of His dear people. May He be pleased to bless the little company who there are willing, from an experimental acquaintance with it, to contend for the power of truth. May He unite them in the bonds of love and affection, and keep far from them all jealousy, division, and disunion. You will have much to contend with from without and from within, from the world and from professors, as well as from yourselves. Many are watching for your halting, and saying, perhaps, of your little Zion (Neh. iv. 3), even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall. May the blessed Lord keep you from disunion and division amongst yourselves, and may He shut out all jealousy and suspicions of one another, and unite you to contend as one man for the faith once delivered unto the saints.

I have, through mercy, enjoyed of late better health than when I saw you in the summer, and have reason to bless God for the comforts and kindness which He daily bestows upon me in His providence. I am sure He is kind to the unthankful and to the evil, and is never weary with blessing the rebellious and ungrateful. If, indeed, we belong to His blood-bought family, well may we say, " Happy art thou, O Israel : who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord ? " It is uncertain when I shall see you all again in the flesh, but trust I shall ever continue to love you with Christian affection. Give my Christian regards to all the Christian friends who meet together to worship in spirit and truth.

I shall be glad to hear from any of the friends that can write, as I wish to know how you are going on.

I am, your and their affectionate friend,

J. C. P.

(16)

To James Brookland.

Allington, Nov. 12, 1835.

My dear Brookland,—To all that, under the blessed Spirit's teaching, experimentally and feelingly know the plague of their own heart, and something of the riches of a Saviour's blood, grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

An opportunity occurring to answer your letter, I reply to it sooner than I might otherwise have done; and may the eternal Spirit guide my pen to write a few lines on vital godliness and experimental truth to the comfort of any of God's quickened family who may hear or read them.

Instead, then, of finding day by day the number of heaven-taught souls increase in my eyes, I seem to draw the circle narrower and narrower; and the more that I am led to see the nature and reality of true religion, and the great mystery of godliness, I seem to see more and more how few are experimentally led into it. Notion is the grand deceit with which Satan deceiveth the nations; the husks which the swine do eat he passes off as the bread of life. Dry doctrines, which only puff men up with pride and presumption, he palms off as the truth as it is in Jesus. A sound creed, a fluent tongue, a well-informed judgment, a ready gift in prayer, a consistent life, attendance on the means, a sanctified look, a knowledge of the Scriptures, pass off upon thousands as the religion that can save the soul.

I am quite convinced that very few persons have been taught by the blessed Spirit even the very first elements of religion, namely, repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. A man that has repented toward God has had his back broken, his mouth has been in the dust, and himself plunged into the ditch till his own clothes abhorred him. The idol of free-will has been broken to pieces, self-righteousness stripped away, presumption plucked up by the roots, and hypocrisy torn off. Not but that these members of the old man will ever continue to trouble and plague the living soul, but they will be hated and disallowed. "What I do I allow not," said Paul of old. "God maketh my heart soft," says Job (xxiii. 16). And thus, when there is true repentance toward God, the heart will be softened down into meekness and contrition. But how few are lepers; how few have got the plague of leprosy in their houses, their garments, or their bodies! They have never had this spreading scab and quick raw flesh (Lev. xiii. 8–10) to eat the vitals of their fleshly religion, and to make them filthy and leprous from the crown of the head to the soles of the feet. A man must know something of this inward experience before he can be said to repent towards God. And, again, how few have the other element of true religion—namely, faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ (Acts xx. 21). Most persons' faith is an assent and consent to the mere letter of truth. They believe because they never disbelieved. They believe because their fathers told them so; because they were taught in the Sunday school; because they have read about Jesus Christ in the Word; because they have heard Mr. So-and-So preach about it; because they have read a tract of Dr. Hawker's which explained the way of salvation; because they have heard others tell their experience; and because it is so wicked and dreadful not to believe in our blessed Saviour.

Such are some of the lying delusions of the father of lies whereby souls are juggled into hell. A notional faith never did and never can save a soul. To be thus born of blood, and of the will of the flesh, and of the will of man, leaves the soul where it found it—an enemy to God, and the bond slave of the devil. And all this false notional and fleshly religion will be as stubble when "the day cometh that shall burn as an oven." May the blessed Lord keep us from a notional religion, which will only leave our souls exposed and naked to His terrible wrath when He shall rise up to the prey. The only faith that can satisfy a living soul is that which is the gift of God, and springs out of the inward relation of Jesus Christ. How few have experienced that work of faith with power whereby they have come out of themselves as Lazarus came forth from the tombs. The question is, What has our religion done for us? Has it left us where it found us? Are we, indeed, new creatures; have we been inwardly and experimentally translated from the power of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son? We had better throw away our religion on the first dunghill we come to, to rot there in corruption, if we have nothing better than a name to live. We had better be open sinners than deceived and deceiving hypocrites. But I believe no living soul can be satisfied with a notional religion; though a miserable backslider, and driven into the fields to feed swine, he cannot feed on their husks, but sighs after the bread of his Father's house. The eyes being enlightened to see the nature of sin, the justice and holiness of God, and the miserable filthiness of self, the quickened soul can find no rest in anything short of a precious discovery of the Lamb of God; and the more that the soul is exercised with trials, difficulties, temptations, doubts and besetments of various kinds, the more does it feel its need of that blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel. What is a Christian worth without inward trials and exercises? How dead and lifeless are our prayers; how cold and formal when the soul is not kept alive by inward exercises! Where are the sighs, cries, groanings, wrestlings, and breathings of a soul that is at ease in Zion? The world is everything and Christ nothing, when we become settled on our lees, and not emptied from vessel to vessel; but inward exercises, fears, straits, and temptations, stir up the soul to cry, and pray, and beg for mercy. The certainty, the power, the reality of eternal things is then felt, when guilt, and wrath, and fear, and disquietude lay hold of the soul. Mere notions alone of Christ, false hope, a dead faith, a presumptuous confidence, a rotten assurance, are all swept away as so many refuges of lies, when the soul is made to feel its nakedness and nothingness, its guilt and helplessness before God. And thus all their inward exercises pave the way for their discoveries of Christ—those views of His blood and righteousness, that experimental acquaintance with His person, love, grace, and work, which is life and peace.

May this be our religion. It is a religion that we can die by, but it is a religion which the profane and professing world hates and derides. If you and the other friends of truth who meet together at Stadham are enabled to contend for this religion, you will be hated and despised by those professors who never had their backs broken and their mouths in the dust; for you cannot sanction and uphold their religion, and will be constrained, as wine which hath no vent (Job xxxii. 19), to tell them faithfully your opinion of their state. You that contend for experimental realities are a city set on a hill: all eyes are upon you; the professor and the profane will alike watch for your halting. They would say of your little cause, "Raze it, raze it, even to the foundation thereof;" and much would it please them if you would say "A confederacy" to all to whom they shall say a confederacy. May the blessed Lord keep your steps. Oh, how weak and helpless we are! how fond of sin, how averse to God! If He does not keep us, we must fall. Our pride, presumption, hypocrisy, lust, covetousness, carnality, love of ease, and fear of the cross, must overcome us unless He is stronger than we, and prevails.

It is very uncertain when I shall see the friends at Stadham and the neighbourhood face to face. I shall most probably winter here, and believe it is of the Lord that my steps were directed to this place, as it affords me a much wider sphere of usefulness, if the Lord bless the word, than I could have had at Stadham. If, indeed, the King of Zion was pleased to bless my weak ministry at Stadham, it will be proved by the people's abiding in the truth who professed to have been profited by it. By their steadfast perseverance in, and earnestly contending for, the faith once delivered to the saints, they will make it manifest whether they have been spiritually quickened, or have learnt their religion from man. And if the blessed Lord has indeed been pleased to raise up your little cause as a witness for Himself against corruption and error, He will keep it, He will water it every moment; lest any hurt it, He will keep it night and day. I hope you may soon see the foundation-stone of a house for His worship laid, and that He will create upon your assemblies a cloud and smoke by day and the shining of a flaming fire by night.

My love to all that have been made honest, who fear God, have a tender conscience, and depart from evil.

Greet the friends by name,

Yours and theirs affectionately in Christ Jesus,

J. C. P.

(17)

To Joseph Parry.

Stamford, July 18th, 1836.

My dear Friend.—It being Monday, and I being, as usual, not fully recovered from yesterday's exertions, I will not promise to write at any great length. I arrived here on Friday evening last from Oakham, a distance of about eleven miles. Mr. de Merveilleux sent a fly for me, so that I arrived here without inconvenience, though the day was cold and rainy. I was very unwell during the first part of my stay at Oakham, having caught cold on my journey. Towards the end of last week, however, I rallied, and am now, through mercy, as well as I usually am. I preached at Oakham twice yesterday week, July 10th, and again on the following Wednesday, July 13th. Yesterday I preached twice in Mr. de Merveilleux's chapel here. The place was very full both times. Many, no doubt, were attracted from curiosity, my "Letter" having been widely circulated in these parts, and my intention to preach having been made known through the newspaper, as well as by printed bills. The Baptist minister left his flock to visit his friends, and, there being no Supply, his congregation came to hear me. Many church-people, too, were present; and doubtless we had a sprinkling of gracious characters out of the country, for many miles round. I never feel at home amidst such a motley multitude, and such was the case yesterday. I attempted, with God's help, to cut down natural, and to build up spiritual religion; but I fear Joseph Charles had much more hand in the sermon both times than the Spirit of the living God. At least, if they were as much dissatisfied with me as I was with myself, the children of God went grumbling home; and if the word came home to them with no greater power than I felt it myself, they went home as hungry as they came.

I have received invitations to preach from Boston, Peterborough, Leicester, and Cambridge. All these invitations I have declined but the last, which I have accepted for Thursday, July 28th, on my way to Welwyn.

I found myself quite at home at Oakham, Mr. and Mrs. Keal having all the friendliness and hospitality of Tiptaft. I cannot say that I was much favoured in the ministry there, being, in my own feelings, shut up, except on the last time that I preached, which was on Wednesday last, when, the spring seeming to flow and the cruse to run, I was enabled, as I freely received, so freely to give. A great multitude, especially if in a strange place, usually shuts me up, and, instead of a sweet entrance into the word of truth, and a living experience, I seem able to bring forth nothing but a noisy stream of pulpit prattle and a tangled skein of unmeaning declamation.

I find Mr. de Merveilleux very kind; and, indeed, so vile and unworthy a wretch as I, who seem at times to be a burden to myself and to everybody else, finds everywhere kindness and attention. They wish me very much to come again to Oakham, and I have thought of the following plan, if it should be agreeable to the friends and yourself. Instead of going down to Plymouth, as I proposed, I would return to Allington from London, so as to preach on Lord's-day, August 14. Thus I would stay with you during August and September, and leave you during the month of October, which, in that case, I would spend at Oakham. The weather in October is not too cold, and the days not too short, to hinder my travelling at that time. I think such an arrangement might suit me, as well as yourselves and the friends at Oakham. August, I know, does not suit you so well, as it is so bustling a time; but it is hard to arrange any plan to which objections may not be raised. There is a great spirit of hearing at Oakham, and I have found myself well received by the people. On Wednesday evening last the congregation was larger than at Allington on the Lord's-day afternoon. Let me hear from you on this subject immediately as I wish to write to Plymouth, which I cannot do till I receive your reply. I shall hope to spend the winter at your friendly and hospitable fireside.

This dry weather, I suppose, stirs up the old man sometimes in your bosom, and you are thinking what will become of the sheep unless the turnips look better than they now do. I observed that the wheat crops in Berkshire, Oxfordshire, and Northamptonshire had a much better appearance than those in Wiltshire. But what will it signify to Joseph Parry, in a few years, whether "the fly" had carried off his turnips or not; and what will it matter to J. C. Philpot whether his chest was sound or unsound? But how much will it matter to each of them whether their religion was natural or spiritual, their faith human or divine, their hope a heavenly gift or a spider's web! But our blind, foolish hearts are so concerned about things which are but the dust of the balance, and so little anxious about our all in all.

I hope that friend Stenchcumb was heard with profit, and brought you some of the good old wine, and that Tiptaft was favoured with a door of utterance and a door of entrance into your souls.

I intend to leave Stamford, if the Lord will, on Wednesday, July 27, and proceed by Cambridge to Welwyn, where I hope to arrive the Friday evening following. On the succeeding Tuesday I shall hope to go to London, and it will depend on the arrangement that we may make whether I shall proceed to Plymouth or Allington. I would wish to consult the wishes of the friends, as well as my own; and though I cannot brook much thwarting or controlling, I feel desirous to walk amicably and comfortably with the people of God.

I hope the friends are well, body and soul, and that the Lord has shone upon your assemblies. Greet them all with my Christian love. The children, I hope, are well. May the Lord stir up our fainting, stumbling souls, and lead us into all experimental truth. My affectionate remembrances to Mrs. P., Mr. and Mrs. T., Mrs. C., and all that have any care for, or any interest in, so poor a creature as

Your affectionate Friend,

J. C. P.

(18)

To Joseph Parry.

Stamford, July 25, 1836.

My dear Friend,—I fear I must make my usual excuse for a short letter, viz., that it is Monday, on which day, you know, I am fit for little else than to loll about and do nothing. Mr. Keal was over here from Oakham yesterday, and we talked matters over. The arrangement which I seem to have come to is to be at Allington before August 14th, so as to stay with you during that month and the following, and return, if the Lord will, to Oakham by the first Lord's-day in October. I must thus give up my visit to Plymouth, which will be a disappointment to my mother, as well as to myself, and deprive myself of that rest in which I usually indulge my poor body once a year.

The opening for truth at Oakham and Stamford is very great, and persons come from distances which put your lazy Wiltshire professors to the blush. Twenty miles is not thought much of as a distance in this country. Yesterday morning was very wet, and this thinned down the congregation to what the Dissenters call "comfortably full"; but, the weather clearing up, the afternoon congregation was overflowing. It appeared to me larger than on the Lord's-day previous. Through mercy, I was holpen with a little help, and the door of utterance was not shut so close as I often feel it, and thus I was enabled to deal out a portion to professor and possessor more than I sometimes can. On Wednesday next I intend, if God will, to leave Stamford for Cambridge, where I am to preach next evening. On Friday I mean to go to Welwyn, and on August 2nd to London, and hope to reach Allington August 12th, but will write to Mr. Tuckwell or yourself to mention when you are to send to Marlborough for me. Mr. T., it appears, was anxious to view my old haunts at Oxford, and went to spy out the nakedness of Worcester College. I doubt not he thought the inside quadrangle a pretty spot. My rooms were in the handsome range of building upon the terrace, to the right as a person enters the College. Well, they have pretty much forgotten me, and I them. Our tie has been broken through for ever, and I am satisfied it should be so.

I am glad that you heard Tiptaft well, and that he found an entrance into your heart. You had, no doubt, much conversation together, and I dare say he asked many questions on many subjects. He will not lack information if inquiry can obtain it. I have found much kindness both here and at Oakham. Mr. Keal is a particularly friendly person, and we soon became able to converse freely. His wife is very much like Tiptaft in manners and disposition. If I consulted my own wishes I should go to Plymouth and rest, and return to Allington in September, as I originally proposed. But there seems a field of usefulness opened here, and my ministry appears to be received by the people of God. An old professor came about thirty miles to hear yesterday, and came to see me this morning for about three hours. I found him a man well and deeply taught in the things of the Lord.

You will, perhaps, think that my coming into these parts may be the first step to my leaving Allington altogether. I do not anticipate any such conclusion. It may lead to my coming here occasionally, but I do not think it will have any other consequence. Both at Oakham and here they seem attached to the ministry of Tiptaft and Smart, and I think the utmost of their wishes is that we three should come as well as we may be able. Mr. Keal does not wish to hear any other ministers, and reads when one of us is not at Oakham. Mr. de Merveilleux engaged a minister, who proved to be a duty-faith man, and he was obliged to withdraw from his ministry; so that he usually reads in the vestry, and that to not more than twelve persons. Nearly all the congregation left with the minister, and took a room very near. Thus, as this is an infant cause, and there is much opposition both from church and chapel, it needs a little fostering.

I do not forget the kindness of yourself and Mrs. Parry amidst the kindness of my new friends, and I do not believe that I ever shall. Wherever a union is felt, through grace in the heart, it cannot easily be torn up. Jealousies may rise, and evil tempers may work, but I believe there will be always a revival of affection in the soul where a true union exists.

I have sold nearly two hundred copies of my pamphlet here and at Oakham. Nearly all the influential people of this town are acquainted with my family, my grandfather having resided here many years. What a violent tearing asunder of all natural ties is produced by leaving the Establishment! Those who would have hailed me as a friend, would now turn from me as an enemy. I find more and more that to leave Babylon is to offend all that is respectable and worldly. Mr. —— would not be so angry, nor his friend Miss J., if I would uphold their system. Well, their hatred little troubles me. I fear my own vile heart more than their enmity, and if they knew as much of my vileness as I do, they would find plenty of room to shoot their arrows at, I am quite aware of your kindness from repeated instances of it, as well as that of your wife, and hope that nothing may ever occur to interrupt our friendship. My kind regards to Mrs. Parry, and remember me very kindly to all inquiring friends. I am obliged to Mr. Tuckwell for his kind letter. I am, through mercy, pretty well, and beg to remain,

Your affectionate Friend,

J. C. P.

P.S.—Shall I buy any of Huntington's works for you, as there is a cheap edition coming out, and you would find them profitable to read and lend?

(19)

To Joseph Parry.

London, August 6th, 1836.

My dear Friend,—As the time of my return to Allington is drawing near, you are doubtless expecting a line from me to fix the precise day on which you are to send to Marlborough for me. I intend, then, to leave town on Tuesday morning next, if the Lord will, and do not think of stopping anywhere on the road before I reach Marlborough. Mrs. Merrewether, probably, and the friends at Newbury would wish me to stop one night there, and speak in her room; but I feel so unfit to preach anywhere, that necessity must be laid upon me before I can engage in the work. I believe, if it were left to me, I should never preach again—so much vileness, unbelief, and dreadful sinfulness do I feel working within. Those who say they always hate sin must have very different feelings from me, as the chief part of my burden is that I love it so much. I feel something like a man in love, who is prevented by a thousand obstacles from gaining what his heart is set upon. If he did not love the fair lass, his heart and affections would not always be roving after her, and he would little care whether she were dead or alive. But to feel the constant workings of passionate love and eager desire, and then to be prevented, cut off, and intercepted by a thousand difficulties, this will make a man miserable enough. Thus sin, that crafty and cursed Delilah, is loved to distraction by our old man. If we dared woo and win this beautiful Philistine, a match would be made, vows plighted, hands joined, and the marriage celebrated. But when a tender conscience, a godly fear, the wrath of God against sin, His presence in the soul, and a thousand other inward obstacles step forward and forbid the banns, and positively forbid a union, what a storm does it raise within! But if to press the hand and touch the lips of this accursed Delilah cause such guilt within, and force out such groans and sighs from a burdened conscience, it is our richest mercy that so many real friends come forward and prevent a complete union. These two things I know, that sin is sweet, and that sin is bitter. The honey and the sting are in the same bee, and, if you plunder the hive, it is a narrow escape if you are not stung to death. . . .

I left Stamford, July 27, and arrived at Cambridge the same evening. On the following evening I preached at a chapel, about a mile out of the town, to a full congregation. If they felt as straitened as I did, they were shut up enough; and if they were as dissatisfied with me as I was with myself, they went grumbling home. On the next day I arrived at Welwyn. I found friend L. and his wife very kind, and was quite at home with the friends at Welwyn on spiritual things. I think them a people of the right stamp. I cannot say I was much at home in the pulpit on the Lord's-day. On the Tuesday evening, however, I spoke again and felt more of the springing well and flowing brook. The place was quite full on Lord's-day both times, and on the Tuesday evening there were not many vacant places. The friends thought the place was fuller on the Lord's-day than they had ever seen it.

Friend Smart's house is roofed in, and, if the God of all comfort now and then visits it with His presence, will be a comfortable abode for him. The plan is simple enough. Two rooms, one on each side the street-door, will form his kitchen and parlour below, and there will be two bedrooms above. I told Friend L. that a third bedroom was wanting for the little handmaid, as he would wish to have a spare bedroom for a friend. On the day before I left, the foundation was laid for the washhouse, etc. The friends of truth are looking anxiously forward to his coming to settle amongst them, and the friends of the world are marvelling that so much has been done to carry on the cause, the downfall of which they prophesied.

I am pretty well tired of London, though from my former residence of six years in it, and continual visits to it for nearly every year since I was nine years old, it is less strange to me than to most regular inhabitants of the country. It is some degrees warmer than the country, which, in some respects, suits me, though I find more excitement from its noise and bustle than is good for my head and chest.

I hope I shall see Friend Smart before he leaves Wilts. You must do your best to detain him at Allington until I arrive, and as long after as he feels disposed to stay. I sincerely hope that the Lord may be with him to-morrow, and give the word that he shall preach a blessing, and effectual entrance into your hearts. I do not know what you would do in this scene of bustle and confusion, where Mammon seems universally worshipped, and where Satan's seat seems above most places to be. I shall hope, if the Lord will, to find you, your wife, and children, well. Remember me affectionately to all inquiring friends, and

Believe me to be,
Your affectionate Friend,
J. C. P.

(20)

TO JOSEPH PARRY.

Stamford, October 24, 1836.

My dear Friend,—I arrived here on Friday last from Oakham, and am, through mercy, pretty well.

The friends at Oakham have much pressed me to stay the winter, to which I should not have any great objection, as the climate is mild, the friends kind, and the door for preaching wide. The last Lord's-day afternoon on which I preached being very fine (Oct. 16), the congregation was overflowing. A person at the door counted fifty who could not get in ; and on last Wednesday evening, which was moonlight and a beautiful evening, we had considerably more than at Allington on the Lord's-day afternoon. I do not mention this as though it were anything, for novelty will bring a congregation ; and I dislike a crowd, as it usually shuts me up, and seems to draw back anything like a flow of unction and feeling. I seem at such times lost in a flood of unmeaning generalities, and to have no power to dive into the depths of man's heart. Like a raw swimmer, I seem to be splashing in shallow water, knocking the waves about, perhaps, as I spread forth my hands to swim, and every now and then gulping down a draught of salt water or gasping for breath, but unable to dive into those dark silent depths of internal experience or the calm depths of a free-grace salvation, without which to preach is only to beat the air and to run as uncertainly ; yet this I would say to the glory of God, that though wretchedly dark and barren out of the pulpit, I have not been altogether left to my foolish and empty self in it since I left Allington, but have at times found life, and light, and a door of utterance opened out of confusion and ignorance. Yesterday morning I felt myself favoured in some degree with an open door ; but in the afternoon my old shackles were again put on, and confusion and perplexity seemed to fill my mind. The congregation was very large both times, the day being fine, and in the afternoon uncomfortably crowded. I feel, however, but little drawing towards Stamford, and should fear there is but little life in the place. I am much more at home at Oakham, and have usually more feeling and liberty in that pulpit than in this. . . .

Poor —— seems to display his weakness more and more. I can hardly think him sincere in all his admissions to you, but I believe the great key to his words and actions is to know that he has no fixed opinion to give, and no firm principles on which to act. A man that does not know his own mind must always be a puzzle to others, and I should expect fixedness as much from a weather-cock as from ——. A weather-cock, you know, will sometimes not turn for a week if the wind is still, and rust will make it at times wondrous steady; but a good stiff breeze will turn it round a hundred times a day. Let Master —— encounter what the sailors call a north-wester, or let "a tempestuous wind called Euroclydon" beat into him, and I believe he would be in their case of whom we read that, "when the ship was caught, and could not bear up into the wind, we let her drive." If the —— friends had gone down to the sea in ships, and done business in great waters, they would have found out that their pilot looked too much to the chart, when he should have sounded, and if he had found it twenty fathoms should have gone a little further and sounded again, and if he found it fifteen fathoms, should have cast four anchors out of the stern and wished for day. But, instead of that, when the wind of Irvingism "blew softly" he must needs loose the rudder-bands and hoist up the mainsail to the wind, and make towards shore; and thus he fell into a place where two seas met—the sea of experimental Calvinism and the sea of Arminian Irvingism; and then need we wonder if he ran the ship aground, and whilst the forepart, *i.e.*, his head, stuck fast and remained immovable in the sands of unknown tongues, miraculous cures, and unfulfilled prophecy, the hinder part, *i.e.*, what the Lord had done in his heart, was broken with the violence of the waves? I can only say that it will be his mercy if he escapes safe to land on boards or broken pieces of the ship. As Master —— is so fond of spiritualising the word, he could not be offended at my tracing his experience in Acts xxvii., and I believe that my explanation is every whit as good as his interpretation of "The Wall," which he was so willing to favour you with.

I hope that Friend Smart will furnish you with such savoury meals that you will go in the strength of that meat many days, and will not want to be fed again for some weeks to come.

I wonder, indeed, that any persons are willing to be burdened with my company, as I am often a burden to myself, and am a wretched mass of vileness and corruption. I seem surprised at the priestcraft of the human mind, which makes people so fond of ministers. If they all thought of them as I do, there would be many sent to the right-about. They would see that they had a deal more of the devil in them than of the angel, much more of the flesh than the spirit, and more hypocrisy than humility. I wonder sometimes that persons can bear my rough remarks, and rude speeches, and doubts as to the genuineness of their religion; but I suppose they see enough carnality in me to serve as a nice excuse for their own. If the minister is so carnal, says Mr. Worldly-mind, surely I may be so too; and if the Reverend Dr. So-and-so is not always so spiritual, surely I may give my tongue a little licence. Thus people like the ministers to be carnal, that under this shed, as Friend Kay says, they may creep with their carnality, and think they will do exceedingly well if they have half the religion that the parson has. It is to some such feeling as this deeply lodged in the human heart that I am fain to ascribe the kind reception I meet with wherever I go.

Your affectionate Friend,

J. C. P.

(21)

To Joseph Parry.

Oakham, Nov. 14, 1836.

My dear Friend,—I hinted in my last letter at the probability of my staying the winter in these parts, and as the friends here, and at Stamford, are very urgent that I should do so, I seem inclined to listen to their wishes. I do not, however, think it right to decide upon a point which affects you as well as them, without first writing to you on the subject. I am encouraged to continue here a while longer, as the people profess to derive profit from my ministry. At Allington, you know, the winter congregation is often very scanty. I find the climate here and at Stamford much more suitable to my weak chest than the cold blasts which blow so chill and strong over your unsheltered downs. I hope you know me too well to think I have forgotten your unvarying kindness, or that I am tired, either of your hospitable fireside, or of the pulpit where, I trust, I have at times felt refreshings from the presence of the King of kings. I should be sorry, too, that you should think I have any intention of forsaking Allington, or that new faces and new friends have had the effect of dividing my regard for old ones. You recollect, when I first came among you, I never promised to tie myself to Allington, and have always considered myself as a temporary Supply, who was at liberty to go away for a shorter or longer time, or even altogether, without its being considered that I violated any engagement, or broke any promise. At the same time I feel a regard for Allington, and for some of the people who attend the chapel there, and, I need not add, for yourself. But, after all this preface, you will be saying to yourself, "But how long does he mean to stay away? What does he call staying the winter? How long does he call 'winter'?" Why, if we were to calculate very nicely, it might be winter at Allington, perhaps, when it is spring elsewhere, and the almanacs tell us that winter commences December 21st, and ends March 21st. And if my chest were consulted on the subject, and I do assure you that I am obliged to take its opinion much more than I could wish, it might say winter lasts from September to the beginning of June. I will not then take either Francis Moore's winter, or my chest-definition of the same season, lest I should weary out your patience altogether. But I think it probable I shall continue in these parts during the months of December and January, and return to Allington about the beginning of February. In this case, I purpose to be at Oakham the three following Lord's-days, November 20th and 27th, and December 4th. I then think of returning to Stamford, to be there three or four Lord's-days more, and to return afterwards to Oakham. There is a great spirit of hearing both here and at Stamford, and persons come from considerable distances. I have been favoured at times with the Lord's presence in the pulpit, and as the people profess to hear me well on different occasions, I feel encouraged to continue a little while longer amongst them. If you cannot procure such Supplies as you can profitably and comfortably hear, I should recommend you to go on with reading. And I would counsel you to read sometimes Huntington, and at other times Webster, as the people seem to hear with profit.

Tiptaft has been for five Lord's-days in London, and, according to his own account, got on better with the Londoners than he expected. I wrote to him a few days ago, and mentioned my plan of staying here a while longer, as well as suggested that he might pay Allington a visit. I get on but slowly with my pamphlet, and have a new work in hand, a sermon from Isa. l. 10, 11.* This, however, I am getting on but slowly with, and find my quiet room at Allington more favourable to writing than this place, or Stamford, where there are so many things to distract the attention. I was surprised yet glad to hear that Friend Smart preached at Devizes, and I hope he shook the boughs with a firm and vigorous hand. I shall be glad to hear that the Lord was with him there as well as at Allington. For myself I go on in spiritual things much as usual, generally very dark and dead, and at other times favoured with desires and breathings after a fuller discovery and enjoyment of eternal things. I feel, however, that the old vile heart will turn up its mire and filth, and that no change of time or place can bring a clean thing out of an unclean. I need not say I meet with every kindness both here and at Stamford, and can only wonder what persons can see in me to call forth so much attention and regard. They do not, I believe, see me as I see myself, and it is my mercy that they do not know all the workings of a vile and depraved heart.

I think, with one exception, besides twice on the Lord's-day, I have preached once in the week regularly since I left Allington. I have received an invitation from Boston, which I have promised to attend to for some future opportunity, besides one from Nottingham, Lynn, Woburn, and other places. But when I return to Allington, I shall hope to remain there quietly for a few months. I have through mercy been stronger, since I left Allington, in my chest and general health, and do not feel the cold weather quite so sensibly. This, I confess, is one reason why I am induced to spend the severe part of the winter here, as I do not forget my last winter at Allington, and how I suffered from the cold.

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* Eventually published as *The Heir of Heaven Walking in Darkness and the Heir of Hell Walking in Light.* Latest edition, 1928.

Let me hear from you soon, and write me a good long letter. . . .

Believe me to be,
Your affectionate Friend,
J. C. P.

(22)

To Joseph Parry.

Oakham, Dec. 1, 1836.

My dear Friend,—I am very sorry that my intention to continue here a little longer has so much hurt your feelings, and that you have found the old man so rebellious on the subject. I find it very difficult so to act as to escape censure from some one or other, and whichever way I turn I find difficulties. Ministers cannot always consult private feelings, nor, indeed, would they act right if they did so. Many motives sway their minds and influence their decisions, of which hearers have little conception. The hearer looks only to himself and his own pleasure in hearing any favourite minister, and never considers how far that ministry, which is profitable to him, may be so to others also. But the minister looks to where he has the widest door set before him—where he is most blessed himself, where the most evident blessing rests on the word, and where he feels most unction and power present with him. And thus he has many motives and leadings, of which the hearers know nothing. I feel, too, in my own case, as you yourself have so often remarked, that I require some time to make way into the understandings and affections of the people, and that it is not half-a-dozen sermons which will make my drift evident. To this let me add that I require a short time before I am at home in the pulpit, and that a little thing will shut me up, and stop the flow of utterance which I enjoy sometimes. I need not enlarge on this point, as you have often remarked the same, and said I need a little time before the people can receive my ministry and enter into my drift. I feel that hitherto I have been labouring at a disadvantage, and that I am only just now obtaining a footing in the understandings and affections of the people. This is one main reason why I have been induced to prolong my stay. I have felt desirous, too, of leading the people to contend for *right* things, for internals more than externals ; and I have been anxious to demolish some of those mighty castles of letter-religion which Satan everywhere builds up. I find I cannot accomplish my work in one or two sermons, and that I have to build up, as well as to throw down. These motives have weighed with me to continue some time longer, and I have been further induced by the often-repeated wishes of the people and my kind friends here and at Stamford. To this I must add that I have been so much better in health, and find the climate much more congenial to my weak chest than Allington. Thus, I can say it is from no diminution of either Christian affection or esteem that I have protracted my stay from your hospitable fireside ; and I trust I need not add that it is no mercenary motive that weighs with me, as I have many expenses here, as travelling, servants at two houses, washing, wear and tear of better clothes, &c., which I have not at Allington. I hope I have said enough to set your mind at rest, and I need not hint that I am bound by no engagement to Allington, and have always considered myself as a Supply from week to week. Indeed, I may add that my strongest tie to Allington is my private friendship for you, though I admit that there are several in and out of the church to whom I feel a union, and whom I shall be glad to see again. I intend at present (D.V.) to return to Allington some time in February, if health and weather permit, and hope to stay with you for a few months, before I take a second flight.

I am glad that Friend Warburton has paid you a visit, and that his word was blessed. John, with all his faults, has the right stuff in him, and will outlive a thousand May-flies, who flutter their hour in the religious world.

I intend (D.V.) to leave Oakham for Stamford about Dec. 8, and shall stay until about Jan. 5, continuing there for four Lord's-days. I do not see that you should be anxious about having preachers. Your cause is small, and in winter the congregation is never very numerous. Let them hear Huntington or Webster, and I believe they will hear no such preaching as the former, let them go where they will. Stand firm for experimental truth ; none but the chaff oppose it. I doubt not that many are glad that the troubler of Israel is many miles away from Allington, and that the Church ministers are not the only persons who are secretly rejoiced. I hope, however, if the Lord will, to trouble them again, and not leave them always to rejoice.

My sermon advances slowly. I find that so much letter-writing as I have cuts up my time for it very much. It is quite uncertain when I shall be able to bring it out. I often find it irksome to write, and a thousand excuses rise up in my mind to defer it to another day, and thus I do not often set to work upon it. A person has offered to advance me £50 if I could put to press a volume of sermons; but I have no intention to do so. My other pamphlet I have laid aside for a long time.*

I hope the Lord may lead us more and more to contend for *realities*—the things that accompany salvation. All things else are mere soap-bubbles, blown up by the breath of a child, which glitter for a few moments with the rays of the sun, and then burst for ever. If the people at Allington do not contend for realities, it shows there is a woeful deficiency somewhere; for I am well satisfied that God will make all His people, great and small, contend for what they have tasted and handled. I look upon it, then, as a fatal mark, when men are contending for externals and doting about questions, whilst they neglect the weightier matters of the law. Contend for the power of eternal things and the mysteries of vital godliness, and you will have the devil and his twin family of dead sinners and dead professors against you; but you will have the family of God, to a man, with you, and, above all, you will have God Himself on your side. Where now are all those that, in their day and generation, worshipped an unknown God, talked of an unknown Christ, and took into their lips the name of an unknown Spirit? In hell, is the answer; reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day. And where are all those happy saints who saw, believed in, worshipped and loved a triune God? Safe with Christ; happily landed on the peaceful shore of eternity. A few years will put us amongst one of these two companies. Let us contend, then, earnestly and unwaveringly, for that truth which is able to save our souls. "But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do engender strife." Let us not have separated from ungodly systems and dead professors on account of doctrines only and outward ordinances, however true and scriptural; neither let these things, especially the latter, break the union between the family of God. I am a decided Baptist, but I can stretch my hand across the water to God's children, whose eyes are not open to see the ordinance, whilst there are thousands of Baptists to whom I would not willingly hand a chair. Write me a good long letter soon, as I like your letters much, and think you a very good scribe.

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* This was never finished.

Your affectionate Friend,
J. C. P.

(23)

To Joseph Parry.

Oakham, March 3, 1837.

My dear Friend,—The first edition of my sermon,[†] consisting of 1,500 copies, is already exhausted, and a new edition, with a short preface, will appear in a few days. Fowler has had some orders for this also, so that it appears at present likely to sell. More than 500 copies have been disposed of in these parts, and many have read it who never heard me preach. It has made quite a stir at Stamford, and it is thought many more would come to hear me who have hitherto not done so. P—— of A—— refuses to sell it, as being "contrary to the religion which it professes to illustrate," and has returned all the copies. I have a notion the edge is too keen for his self-righteousness. A—— of O——, I have reason to think, is equally afraid of them. But all this will not stop their sale, and Tiptaft says he will sell them at his chapel. I think you gave too great an order when you wished to have 300. I felt my mouth opened the morning that I preached it, and some have preferred my oral to my written discourse, which is, of course, only a resemblance of it. I am glad you think it sounds like my own, as R. H. might think I have been dipping into the ample stores of Goodwin and others. I think I am too proud and independent to borrow of others if I had no other motives to restrain me, and would not readily send abroad into the light of day stolen goods. This I leave to those who have no mind, no original ideas, no real experience, no open door, no decided views for themselves.

[†] *The Heir of Heaven*, &c.

And I believe stolen goods are sure to be detected, sooner or later, though the fashion of them be altered and the marks cut out. Nothing but realities will ever stand the brunt of time and trouble. The plated goods wear, the mock lustre fades, the potsherd, covered with silver dross, betrays its base original. But gold may be beaten, bruised, worn down, melted, shivered into dust, and each little grain will still say, "I am gold, do what you will to me and grind me down to powder."

"True faith's the life of God,
Deep in the heart it lies;
It lives and labours under load,
Tho' damped it never dies."

Realities! realities! What is all the windy blustering noise of preachers worth who will not contend for realities from a real experience of them? Guilt, condemnation, dismal forebodings of judgment, fears of hell, a sight of one's own self—that hideous monster self—cuts out the way for realities. Real guilt needs real pardon, real weakness requires real strength, real wounds need a real cure, real trouble demands real consolation. A sense of one's own dreadful malady cuts to pieces all that empty, formal, superstitious, traditional religion, in which well-nigh all the churches and chapels of the land seem buried. And when a faithful warner comes, the cry is, "Hast thou found me out, O mine enemy?" Oh, to be kept from myself; my vile, proud lustful, hypocritical, worldly, covetous, presumptuous, obscene self. O self! self! Thy desperate wickedness, thy depravity, thy love of sin, thy abominable pollutions, thy monstrous heart-wickedness, thy wretched deadness, hardness, blindness, and indifference; thou vile wretch, how thou dost make my sword droop and palsiest all my strength! Thou art a treacherous villain, and, I fear, always will be such! Do these exclamations find an echo in J. P.'s bosom? Is my heart a copy of his? Is it a looking-glass in which he sees his face reflected? What! no further yet in sanctification? Tell it not; publish it not.

Such feelings, however, my friend, pave the way for sovereign grace to heal all, cure all, cover all, swallow up all. No half measures, no creature contributions, no a little bit here and a little bit there will do for those who feel so weak, so helpless, and so vile. A dose of evening prayer, or a regular chapter, or a three-times-a-day attendance at chapel, will not reach such a malady as those groan under who know themselves and toil in the deep slough of corruption and heart-wickedness. Something deep, powerful, and effectual; something fully commensurate with the disease; something that goes to the very bottom of the case is required, and where that is not obtained all seems wanting. Few know the up-stroke of the great A in religion who are thought wonderful Christians, and most professors can no more read the mysteries of vital godliness than Belshazzar could read the letters written by the hand upon the wall. . . .

Your affectionate Friend,

J. C. P.

(24)

To Joseph Parry.

Stoke, Devonport, June 3, 1837.

My dear Friend,—I presume you are, by this time, expecting a letter from me and watching the movements of the postman more than usual. I am happy to say that, through much mercy, I arrived here safely, on the evening of the day on which we parted, about ten o'clock. I was a little fatigued with my journey, which, however, a night's sound sleep dissipated, and I awoke in the morning quite uninjured by my long day's work.

I found my dear mother quite as well as I expected. She seems much reconciled to her loss,* and feels that there are many alleviating circumstances connected with it. I find I have already derived benefit from the change of air, combined with the rest of body which I am able to indulge myself with. I do not think it at all likely that I shall preach here, as I am quite unknown, and mean to continue so if I can. The religion of the place seems to me to be chiefly Bible religion, of which there is a vast abundance of every kind and in every direction. I heard, last Lord's-day evening, John Hawker, a son of the Doctor. If his father were like the son, I would not give a shilling a year for a seat under him. Abundance of Scripture, a copious supply of dry doctrine, a tolerable quantity of pride, and enough presumption to stock half-a-dozen pulpits, seemed to me to make up the sermon. Among other things, he said, "Sin! what is sin? I can't define what sin is! Sin is a principle. The Scriptures say it is a transgression of the Law, and that is all

* The death of her elder surviving son, Augustus Robert.

I know about it." I thought if he had tasted the wormwood and the gall, though he might not be able to define the nature of wormwood or explain what gall was composed of, he could have told us what a bitter taste it had, and how many wry faces it causes in those whose mouths are filled with it. Like most ministers whom I hear, he and sin never seem to have fought with drawn swords. As usual, he was "established in Christ"; far too established for a poor creature like me, driven up and down by every vile lust and abomination. I find hearers and preachers must be like mortise and tenon. Unless there be a fitting in of feelings there can be no union, and they are barbarians one to the other. I could see, plainer than ever, that dead Calvinism is the best weapon that Satan has to harden the hearts and sear the consciences of unhumbled professors. I find almost everywhere the same great mistake—Bible religion substituted for soul religion. Believe me, it is here and there only a pilgrim who knows anything of the latter, whilst thousands on thousands have an acquaintance with the former. As to myself, I often feel that hitherto I know nothing as I ought to know, and at present am only groping for the wall like the blind, and groping as if I had no eyes. I am full of confusion, and often full of condemnation, and still more often think, act, and talk as one without God in the world.

I find I can do very little to my intended publication, partly from indolence, partly from disinclination, and partly from weakness of my eyes. Of all places that I know, this is the worst for the eyes, from the dazzling glare produced by the limestone with which the streets are paved and the houses built. All persons, but especially strangers, complain of it. The beauty of the scenery here, the many lovely prospects afforded by a large harbour, enclosed by wooded heights and occupied by noble ships, and the many pretty walks in a rich country, have all tempted me to more exercise than at Allington, and I have already derived benefit from the change. The weather, too, has been fine and warm, and thus I have been able to walk out every day. I have not yet arrived to that degree of perfect sanctification to be dead to all the charms of nature and wonders of art, and can gaze with pleasure on a lovely expanse of blue sea, or on a noble three-decker lying at anchor, as the masterpiece of human skill and ingenuity. Though all things are deadening where God is not, yet I should feel happy to have no worse thoughts than those which arise in my mind as I view the beautiful arm of the sea in which my brother-in-law's noble ship stands out of the clear blue water as a moving fortress, weighing more, probably, than 2,000 tons, and yet moved by every wave, and swinging to and fro at every tide.*

I called on a friend at Exeter on my journey. I found they had had there a minister, but he was obliged to leave. He was one of your dead Calvinists, and had a great knowledge of the word, and a great aptitude at quoting it. But texts and chapters are a poor bulwark against sin. That giant easily runs his spear through such a wooden shield as a memory well stored with passages, and a prating tongue that can repeat them by dozens. A small portion of godly fear will do more against sin than a Concordance, or even Bagster's Family Bible with a million of marginal references. A paper religion is a poor affair. The ten commandments, written by God Himself, could not stand a fall from the hand of Moses, and how can a paper creed stand when a stone decalogue was broken to shivers? The Law, written on fleshy tables of the heart, can alone endure both fire and water, and a living epistle, like a quick hedge, will last a dead letter out, as that will a dead hedge till it is rotten. But whereas two of your labourers could put up the one in a day, whilst the other requires months and years to make it a hedge at all, so a dead religion can be put up under a sermon, whilst a living one needs many revolving seasons to make it grow. It must be cut and pruned, and hoed and weeded, and plashed and well-nigh cut through, and laid flat, before it will become a fence to keep out intruders. A dead hedge needs none of this. A few dry doctrines for stakes, and an ample supply of cant and worldly policy for willow-poles to interweave the stakes with, and a hole dug in natural conscience, by the bar of Moses, are all that is needed for a dead hedge to be made up. It will last a few years, and is sometimes useful to protect the young quick from being nibbled off by goats, but its end is to be burned, and, sooner or later, it finds its way to the oven. I dare say you often think your religion, if it has life at all, is something like the hedge round the orchard, which you have spent so much money and pains upon. O, for a little real, genuine, Divine, God-given, supernatural, eternal life! Nothing else will preserve soul and body from stinking with putrefaction in the nostrils of a holy God.

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* H.M.S. *Adelaide*, the Guardship at Plymouth.

I hope you find the "coal-heaver"* improves as you dig deeper into him. I believe he will be known and valued, just as we know little or much of experimental religion. The world, profane and professing, knoweth not true Christians, because it knew not Christ. It can understand everybody but a gracious soul, and love every one but a child of God. And let me whisper this in your ear, that a sound creed, and a profession of experimental religion, too, cannot open a man's eyes to see, nor his heart to love, the secret track of a living soul. Therefore, friend Parry, marvel not if Particular Baptists' churches and ministers hate you as bad as Wesleyans and Independents.

I intend (D.V.) to be at Trowbridge, June 24, and come to Devizes by coach the following Monday, when please to send in the cart to meet me.

Your affectionate Friend,
J. C. P.

(25)

To Joseph Parry.

Manchester, Sept. 13, 1837.

My dear Friend,—I presume the harvest has found so much occupation for your hands, that it has left none for your fingers. The driving-whip and the pony-bridle have been in such requisition that the ink has become mouldy in the stand, and the penknife covered with rust. As, however, you are at no time fond of writing, and as this uncertain weather must have given you more than your usual harvest occupation, I can readily excuse you. I believe, however, a letter from me finds a welcome at Allington, and therefore, without further delay, I send you a few lines.

I have now fulfilled half of my engagement at Manchester, and have no reason to regret coming into these parts. I cannot, indeed, well say how I have been received by Gadsby's people, but I have reason to believe with some measure of acceptance. I judge more from the size and attentiveness of the congregation, and scattered hints, than from any positive direct testimony. North country people usually are not flatterers, and you know that I am not much of a vestry man, or a gadder about from house to house. A good many persons, methinks, who run about to pick up tit-bits of flattery, would not like to hear all the remarks made upon them even by their professed friends, and did every stick and stone which were hurled at them behind their backs fall upon their skin, they would be too sore to preach the Sunday following. As, however, the deacons have waited upon me to ask me to stay over another Lord's-day, it seems as though they were not fully tired of me. I declined their invitation, as I had previously promised to be at Stamford on October 1, and could not disappoint the friends there.

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* William Huntington, S.S.

I have some thoughts of publishing a sermon which I preached at Oakham on Lord's-day morning, August 20, from Isaiah xviii. 5, 6.* It is the same text that I preached from at Trowbridge, but I could not get into my subject as I did at Oakham, and most probably the printed sermon will differ from both. The text was opened to me one morning at Devonport as I was reading the chapter, and I saw in it a path traced out of which I knew something experimentally. I therefore took it at Trowbridge, but could not get into it, and as I felt a great desire to open up that line of experience at Oakham, I preached from it there, and was more favoured with an entrance into it and an utterance out of it than at Trowbridge. The people, I believe, heard it well, and as it seemed to me a path in which many of God's children walk, when I came here and found more than my usual leisure for writing, I felt inclined to put it upon paper. After I had written some pages, I mentioned my intention in a letter to Oakham, and have since heard from Tiptaft that the friends there had a wish to have the sermon in print before I mentioned the subject. Thus there seems a coincidence of inclinations unknown to each, and this has given me encouragement to persevere in my undertaking.

I went last week to Liverpool by the famous railroad. We were just an hour travelling thirty miles. The last mile and quarter is by a tunnel carried all under the town, which occupied four minutes. During this part of the journey you have no light but that of lamps affixed to the carriages. I was pleased with my visit to Liverpool, and heard a minister there—a Mr. Kent—with great satisfaction. His congregation on the week night did not exceed twelve people. He is building a new chapel at the expense of £1,600, and wishes me to come and assist Gadsby in opening it; it will not be ready till November. I made myself known to him, and was very cordially received, and sat an hour with him the day following. We conversed very pleasantly upon experimental religion, and did not at all jar. He invited me to preach for him, but as I have declined all invitations, I was compelled to refuse. Many invitations have come to me from the neighbouring towns, in most of which some place in connection with Gadsby's is to be found. But I find preaching in this large chapel, twice on the Lord's-day and once in the week (Tuesday evening), quite as much as I can get through. Last Lord's-day I had a cold upon me, and found it hard work before I concluded the day, as I exceeded the hour both times. The congregation was very large, exceeding probably 1,200 persons, and I believe I exerted myself more than was needful, as a lower pitch of voice might have been heard all over the chapel. I have, in other respects, through mercy, been pretty well, though I think the Oakham air suits me better than the Manchester. I intend (D.V.) to preach at Leicester, September 28, on my way to Stamford, and mean to be at Stamford the three first Lord's-days in October, and at Oakham the two last in October and the first in November.

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* The well-known sermon, *Winter afore Harvest; or, The Soul's Growth in Grace.*

I hope the Lord was with Smart, and that you and the friends heard him profitably. You are doubtless reckoning now upon Tiptaft's visit, and getting your appetites well sharpened up to the feeding point. He is an honest, sincere man, and such God will bless.

My religion at times seems altogether gone, and at the bottom of the Kennet and Avon Canal. I have had some heavy steps along its banks, and sighs enough to ruffle its waters.

I have not found many sinners at Manchester. They talk about trials and deliverances, but so few seem to have had a battle with Sin, or know what a giant he is. All seem to have buried him and preached his funeral sermon, and, like Giant Pope and Giant Pagan, he seems only able to grin at the pilgrims, and abide in his cave; but he and I cannot keep so far asunder. I know he has cost me a good many groans and sighs, and yet, to this day, he cleaves to me as the collar of my coat; yea, he is bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh, and is not a neighbour but an in-dweller.

I find Warburton's MS.* will cost me a great deal of labour. Mr. J. Gadsby put it into the hands of a schoolmaster to copy and correct the bad grammar, but he has sewed so much gold fringe upon John's plain cloth, that my present employment is to rip it all off. He has altered John's plain, straightforward language, and made him talk like a schoolmaster, so that my present tedious task is to compare the two copies line by line, and word by word, and restore the original language. This, with numerous letters, and my sermon from Isaiah xviii. 5, 6, leaves me scarcely any leisure time for anything else.

Give my Christian love to all the friends of Jesus, and believe me,

Your sincere and affectionate Friend,

J. C. P.

(26)

To Joseph Parry.

Oakham, October 21, 1837.

My dear Friend,—I can readily imagine you and our mutual friend Tiptaft walking over the farm together, conversing, sometimes on things temporal, and sometimes on things spiritual, and on each and all finding your opinions not very far asunder. It will give me great satisfaction to hear that our valued friend has been blessed to your soul and to the souls of the people of God, and that your drooping hearts have been revived under him.

I arrived here on Friday, and am, through mercy, well and strong in bodily health. I have recovered the fatigue of my Manchester labours, and feel better than I have done for some time. The spirit of hearing at Stamford increases rather than diminishes, and I have never yet seen the chapel so crowded as during this last visit. The beautiful weather and dry walking have, no doubt, lent their powerful aid. As there is such a desire after the word, I have felt induced to half promise that I will come again in the spring, for March and April, previous to my going to London in May, being the first of those months at Stamford, and the second at Oakham. I scarcely expect that this will please my Allington friends, but when I see the great thirst after the word in these parts it makes me feel willing to come amongst them. That I should come in March was Mr. de Merveilleux's proposal, and did not come from Oakham; and it was chiefly seeing the large congregations, and the great desire for preaching at Stamford, that induced me to think seriously of his proposal. How far the work may be of God I will not undertake to decide, and I am sure, so much do I feel of my own vileness and dreadful wickedness, that it astonishes me either to be ever blessed myself or to be blessed to others. I hope Tiptaft will go to Stamford when he comes into these parts, as there is a great desire to hear the truth. Mr. de Merveilleux proposes to build a gallery in his chapel, but I don't much encourage him to do so, as there is so little probability of constant preaching. He is somewhat better in health, but his chest is still very tender.

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* The well-known *Mercies of a Covenant God.* First Edition, 1838; Latest Edition, 1925, London, Farncombe.

I like one of the friends here, but it is young days with him, and he and Giant Sin have not fought many battles. He has never been dashed down by the giant seizing him by the collar of his coat, nor rolled over and over in the stinking ditch of loathsome nature. I wish that giant did not lay hold of me so often and so dreadfully bruise my bones. I could wish at times never to sin more, and not receive such cruel wounds; and at other times I think my conscience is altogether seared and I shall live and die a reprobate. I often see myself an outcast from God and man, and think I shall either be cut down by some sudden judgment or short disease, or die in sullen despair. I am sure I have no reason to love sin, as I have tasted the wormwood and the gall, but if I loved it not my conflict would cease. I am sure we pay very dear for the transient pleasures of sin, and they leave little else but ashes in the mouth after we have sucked the first fruit. Divine things leave no sting, nor cutting remorse behind them, but are like the money we give to any of the Lord's needy family, which, though it may cost a momentary struggle, leaves no guilt and sorrow behind.

They are looking forward here to Tiptaft's visit in January. Reading does here better than at Stamford, but it is very hard to carry a cause on, especially in its infancy, by reading. Persons are so accustomed to preaching from infancy that reading seems hardly worship at all, and this is much the case at Stamford, where there are many persons who would give up their seats at other places of worship, if there were constant preaching at North Street. Their cry is, "What are we to do?" To which my answer is, that it is better to hear truth read than error preached. I may seem, perhaps, more drawn to Stamford than I was. If so, it is for two reasons:—(1) Because I have felt at home in the pulpit there; and (2) because I feel there is a desire after experimental preaching. Tiptaft was heard very well there the last time, and I sincerely hope he will go again.

The Leicester friends wish me to preach there on my way, and I think I shall most likely comply. I wish to see Tiptaft before he leaves for London, and fully intend (D.V.) preaching for him on Nov. 19, and at Allington, Nov. 26. You will then have me for three months before I again start on my travels. I cannot expect you to enter into my feelings as a minister, nor can I enter into yours. Where I am well heard, and feel myself at home in the pulpit, there I like to go, and where I am shut up, there I feel unwilling to set my feet in the stocks. At Allington, however, I have felt at home often, and feel a union with some who worship there, never to be dissolved. Go wherever I may, I shall meet with no kinder or dearer friends than some there. I said at Leicester, speaking of my exercises in leaving the Church, that I had found kinder, better, dearer friends since I left it, and had had every want more liberally supplied, than when I was dependent. I am sure I have had more money to give away, as what comes in liberally opens the heart to go out liberally, whilst a certain small income pinches you up into dross. You know your income and dare not exceed it. Mine was one I could not sink if I would.

October 22.—We have had two large congregations to-day, and this afternoon quite overflowing. I never saw the chapel fuller. I was not at home in the morning, but more so this afternoon. Mr. and Mrs. de M. and Miss L. came from Stamford. He seems quite decided on enlarging the chapel and building a gallery, and calculates on an accommodation for 150 being thus afforded. They think at Nottingham that ministers should leave it to God to sift tares from wheat. S—— has been preaching against baptism, and sprinkled openly six children. They wish me to go again to Nottingham, but I think I shall decline on account of S——'s errors and speaking against baptism. I might as well unite with free-will as infant sprinkling. Though not always prating about it, I cannot bear to have baptism spoken against, as a part of the faith delivered to the saints. I never saw an argument against it worth a straw. S—— thought the eunuch was sprinkled because he would not like to ride in his wet clothes! So Queen Candace's treasurer had not a change of raiment, nor even a portmanteau.

I shall hope to hear from Tiptaft whilst with you, and that when he has left, you will favour me with a long letter. Give him my sincere and affectionate love. I earnestly desire that the Lord may bless him, and believe that He will. I have seen him taken and myself left; him a vessel of mercy and me of wrath. I hope when I have finished Warburton's MS. to go on with my sermon, which is at a complete standstill. There is great inquiry for the Appendix separate from the "Barber's Block,"* which does not seem much admired.

My love to Dredge and all Christian friends.

Yours affectionately,

J. C. P.

(27)

To Joseph Parry.

Oakham, November 8, 1837.

My dear Friend,—If you measure me by yourself you will not conceive writing letters so pleasant a task as to expect two of me before I return to Allington. One, I believe, must satisfy you this time. I intend, God willing, to leave Oakham on the 15th, and hope to arrive at Abingdon that evening. I have been wanted to preach at Newbury, but I cannot fully settle when until I have seen Tiptaft. I am glad he was so well heard at Allington. You, I doubt not, had much pleasant conversation with him, and found in him a listening ear as well as a ready tongue.

The spirit of hearing at Oakham, and the anxiety of the people, greatly induced me to remain so long here. As I was sitting in the pulpit the last Sunday I was there, and viewing the congregation and their eagerness to hear, I felt I was about to return to a comparatively thin chapel, and the desire to preach to a people so willing to hear arose in my mind. And this it was which led me to lend a more willing ear to Mr. de Merveilleux, when he asked me to return in the spring. The general impression here was that I meant to stay the winter, which I never thought of doing since last July. Our congregations here continue unabated, and as we have been favoured with fine Sundays, it enables the distant hearers to come. I don't think any hearers can be fair judges of ministers. They, of course, think of themselves, and if they hear well, and love a minister, they want to keep him all to themselves. He, on the other hand, where he feels life and a blessing to attend his ministry, is drawn to that place, and where he meets a hungry people, is willing to give them such food as he has. And I dare say we wanderers contract a roving disposition and like change. Popularity, too, has its dangerous charms, and large congregations please the carnal mind. But I think I am so well weighted and ballasted by temptations and sins, that popularity has less charms for me than many. A man full of evil, and that continually, has not much to be proud of, and his fear is lest God should stop his mouth or cut him down for his presumption. As a farmer you are not very proud of your diseased lambs, and as a preacher I cannot be very proud of my diseased prayers and sin-stained sermons. Neither can I boast much of my daily backslidings, hardness of heart, discontent, vileness, and abominable filthiness. I at times know not what will become of me, and fear I shall live and die a reprobate. I find sin has such power over me, and, though I call on the Lord again and again for deliverance, seem to be as weak as ever when temptation comes.

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* Among young John Gadsby's publications at this date was a pamphlet, presumably from the vigorous, but unpractised pen of his father, William Gadsby, entitled, *A Dialogue between a Barber's Block and a Methodist Minister, wherein the Question is asked, "What is it that saves a Soul?"* To this my father wrote, as an Appendix, "An Answer to the Important Question, 'What is it that saves a Soul?'" of which the *Gospel Magazine* said, "There is an energy and burning flame in the language, so as to seize the mind as it were by violence."

"O thou hideous monster, sin,
What a curse hast thou brought in!"

I love it, I hate it; I want to be delivered from the power of it, and yet am not satisfied without drinking down its poisoned sweets. It is my hourly companion and my daily curse, the breath of my mouth and the cause of my groans, my incentive to prayer and my hinderer of it, that made a Saviour suffer and makes a Saviour precious, that spoils every pleasure and adds a sting to every pain, that fits a soul for heaven and ripens a soul for hell. Friend Joseph, canst thou make out my riddle?

"Is thy heart as my heart ?" said one of old. "Then come up into my chariot." We shall quarrel by the way unless "as in water face answereth to face, so does the heart of man to man." Black men will not form a good regiment with white ones, and clean hands will not do to show dirty hands with. I believe I shall never live and die a Pharisee. I must come in amongst the sinners, the ragged regiments of adulterous Davids, idolatrous Manassehs, swearing Peters, persecuting Sauls, fornicating Corinthians, railing thieves, and self-abhorring publicans. Pardon, to the innocent, is a word of six letters—and that is all. Redemption, to the self-saved, is a Bible term—no more ; and some of them say it is a universal term, and others a particular term ; and the one quotes an Arminian, and the other a Calvinistic text, and with these sticks they belabour one another's heads. Whilst a lost, sin-bitten, bulrush-bowing,* half-desperate, ditch-plunged, black-hearted wretch, up to the neck in guilt, cries for its individual application as his only remedy and only hope.

I at times quite despair of salvation, and then again am as careless as if hell had no wrath, and heaven no love ; as if sin had no wormwood, and pardon no sweet ; as if there were no God to mark evil, and no devil to tempt to it. So my friend you must not expect to find your winter fireside companion much grown in progressive sanctification and creature holiness.

You say very little about my leaving you again in March ; I suppose, from thinking me too obstinate and self-willed to listen to anybody's will and advice but my own. I shall hope, however, to have some pleasant conversations with you during the dreary months so rapidly coming on. I am glad to hear all your family are well, and desire my kind love to all the children. My kind regards to Mr. and Mrs. T., Mrs. C., and your kind lady, and believe me to be,

Your affectionate Friend,
J. C. P.

(28)

To Joseph Parry.

Oakham, April 30, 1838.

My dear Friend,—I was sorry to learn, through a most kind and affectionate letter from our dear friend Dredge, that you were so much troubled at the mention which I made in my last letter of my intention to settle here. Believe me, my dear friend, that had it not been for my being under the necessity of fixing on some settled place of abode, I should have paused very long before I relinquished my post at Allington; and had I continued, as might, perhaps, have been best for me, unmarried, I should have felt very unwilling to leave that abode, which not only your kindness and hospitality, but also our union in divine things, rendered always so comfortable. I shall never forget that for nearly three years our friendship, instead of diminishing, has only kept continually increasing, and that during all that time no unkind word, or, I believe, even look, has passed between us. Whatever unkind thoughts or feelings Satan or our vile hearts have coined, they have mercifully been confined within our own bosoms. As you never thwarted or opposed me, and, indeed, were only anxious to anticipate my wishes, I cannot take much credit to myself for evenness of temper, as I know not how sullen and growling I might have been had you often trampled on my toes; and you are well aware that I have two or three corns which will not bear much treading upon. And as to my reception by yourself and a few others, as a minister, all I can say is, that I most fully believe that both you and a few others thought by far too well of me, and were blind to great defects which I daily see and feel in myself. Nor do I ever expect to find, wherever I go, hearers, on the whole, comparable to a few at Allington, who understood, received, and felt my drift and line of things, so as in most things that we could see eye to eye, and feel heart to heart, with each other. I feel a real soul union to a few there, who, as our friend Dredge once truly expressed it, met together to worship God aright. And it was the desire of my soul not to read for reading's sake, nor pray for praying's sake, nor preach for preaching's sake, but to be so favoured with the presence and power of the blessed Spirit in each and all, that our souls might be refreshed thereby. And though, through weakness of the flesh, hardness of heart, deadness of soul, temptations of Satan, and withdrawings of God's presence, I was often bound, fettered, and shut up in heart and tongue; yet this I can say, to the honour and glory of God, if ever I felt my heart solemnised in prayer, or my soul enlarged and mouth opened in preaching—if all was not delusion and a subtle refinement of nature counterfeiting the operation of grace—I have felt both in Allington pulpit. I have felt something like what Bunyan mentions ("Grace Abounding," section 282) with respect to the things I have there contended for, "methought I was more than sure that those things which I asserted were true." I was much pleased with friend Dredge's kind letter, and felt a real soul union to him. A few real, gracious, heaven-taught souls, how preferable a thousand times is their friendship to all the canting, whining, "brother this" and "sister that" of empty professors! . . .

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* Isaiah lviii. 5.

When a man begins to doubt, and fear, and question for himself, he will find similar exercises respecting others, and universal charity will wither away from the root. You and I, my friend, cannot say that sin has no dominion over us. Alas! Alas! We feel its power daily and hourly; and we sigh and groan at times to be delivered from the giant strength of those corruptions, which seem to carry us away captive at their will. Though sin is a sweet morsel to our carnal mind, it grieves our soul, cuts up our evidences, removes our landmarks, and often seems to make our salvation impossible. Oh, what snares and temptations does the cunning devil lay for our feet, and seldom do we see the snare before we feel the smart! And a preacher, too! Oh, I think if I were seen in my right colours, and if that window, of which the Wesleyans talk, were placed in my bosom, what filth and vileness would be seen! I am sure I must be a monument of grace and mercy if saved from the guilt, curse, and power of sin. Few know what sin is. Who would think one spark of fire, on which your little boy could tread and extinguish, could burn down your ricks, barns, house, and everything whither it could reach, or on which it could feed? Such is sin. "Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth." We feel we have no strength against sin, and we are sure that the blood of Christ alone can cleanse from sin's guilt and filth, and His grace alone from its power and dominion.

I arrived here on Friday last, and preached yesterday to two large congregations. I felt shut up in the morning, but more at home in the afternoon.

As a convenient house does not offer at Stamford, we think of lodgings for the first year or so. I think most probably we shall be married in July. Give my love to friend Dredge, Mrs. Wild, etc. etc.

Your affectionate Friend, J. C. P.

(29)

To Joseph Parry.

London, June 4, 1838.

Here at length, then, my dear friend, am I in this busy metropolis, where, as far as the eye seeth, well-nigh all are seeking their own, and not the things which are Jesus Christ's ; and yet here, doubtless, there is a remnant, according to the election of grace.

I was sorry to hear of your heavy loss of ewes. I dare say these trials in Providence, which you have lately so much suffered, have been both embers and bellows to the carnal mind, which is enmity against God ; but sure I am that the letter of the word, as well as the universal experience of the living family, testify that providential losses and crosses are marks for, and not against, those that fear God.

I preached twice yesterday to two large congregations ; the evening one might be called overflowing, as the forms were filled up all the aisles, and many sat and stood upon the stairs of the galleries and the windows. I cannot say that I felt much at home in the morning, but had more of a door of utterance in the evening. But, indeed, I feel myself very unfit to preach either in London or anywhere, and would much sooner tarry at Jericho till my beard be grown. I hope, however, the Zoar friends did not think my sword had been lying ever since I saw them at the bottom of the Kennet and Avon Canal, and was covered, blade and handle, with a thick coating of rust. I felt, towards the close of my sermon, that I cared for nothing and nobody so long as I cleared my own conscience, and I desired that every arrow should pierce through the joints of the armour into the heart. That, however, I must leave in the hands of Him who hath twice said that power belongeth unto God. I was not so fatigued with my exertions as I expected, and feel to-day, notwithstanding my broken rest, pretty comfortable and strong. I have walked about a good deal to-day, and am just returned from hearing the Jew, who said some good things ; but not exactly in our line. I intend (D.V.) hearing him again, as he preaches near here every Monday evening, and is very sound in the letter of truth, as well as preaches more experience than most of the London ministers. I see, from his preaching, how defective I am in bringing forward Scripture. He quotes it very much, and often much to the point. I intend taking the opportunity of hearing various ministers whilst in town, that I may feel more what it is to be a hearer, and what food and what preaching feeling souls need.

I was pleased to hear, from Dredge's letter to S——, that he hears Kay so well. It will be quite a providence if you can have him occasionally, as you are likely to be so destitute. I believe him to contend for right things, and to bear many marks of Divine teaching. I do not, however, conceive that he will be permanently attended with crowded congregations.

I find this busy city very distracting at times to my mind, and am too much carried away by its noise and glare. Yet I walk about its streets as one who has no communion with its busy crowds. I heard this morning old Mr. Wilkinson, near the Bank, preach. He appears to be a good old man, but is very smooth, and would by his preaching take in hundreds. He was speaking about the sin against the Holy Ghost, and almost intimated his belief that it could not now be committed. He is the last left of Romaine's school, and is sound in the letter of truth. The aisle was quite full, and I stood during the whole time. I find there are very few preachers that can really hit the right nail on the head. I saw in the old gentleman's sermon, this morning, abundant places for discrimination and separation from the vile, which he never alluded to. No one that I hear ever insinuates a doubt whether there be such a thing as a counterfeit religion and a false experience. The old gentleman would make the stockbrokers look about them if he talked about forged notes and dishonoured bills. The walls of his church form a part of Capel Court, where the Stock Exchange is situate, and many of his hearers are brokers there. I receive most days invitations to preach, but am compelled to decline them all, as having to speak two evenings at Zoar besides my labours on the Lord's-day. You are looking, no doubt, to Tiptaft's coming among you, and expecting much pleasure and profit both from his preaching and conversation. I shall be very glad to hear that the Lord has blessed him both in the pulpit and the parlour. As I have to speak this evening, allow me to wind up thus hastily by signing myself

Your sincere and affectionate Friend, J. C. P.

My Christian love to the friends.

(30)

To Joseph Parry.

London, June 12, 1838.

My dear Friend,—I received your kind letter safely; and as the wetness of the afternoon allows me a leisure hour, I answer it thus early.

I have now fulfilled half my engagement at Zoar, and have reason to be thankful for having been helped thus far. I have never, I think, more sensibly felt my unfitness and unworthiness for the pulpit than during my visit to town this time; and this not because I have been altogether left to my own miserable barrenness and nothingness, or because I have been more than usually shut up and restrained. No; I have reason to be thankful that I have been enabled to contend for the things of salvation with such a measure of utterance as is commonly vouchsafed to me. The morning congregation yesterday (Sunday) was very large, and besides the seats and galleries, the aisles were fully occupied, benches being placed up the middle one. I cannot say that I felt much at home. After service, I received five different invitations to preach, viz.: at Dunmow, Essex; at Winchmore Hill; at a place on the road to Brighton; at Mr. Fowler's, Gower Street; and for the Aged Pilgrims' Friend Society. Of these I could only accept one, viz., the last, as I find that preaching twice at Zoar on the Lord's-day, giving an exhortation, as they call it—though I make a short sermon of it—on Tuesday evening, and preaching again on Thursday evening, is ample work for my weak chest. On yesterday evening the congregation was very large, there being a row of standers as well as sitters up the middle aisle, and all the lobby and porch quite full too. Well, you will say, did not old nature swell up and puff at such a sight? Ah, my friend, I had ample valves to let out all this stinking gas. First, I felt that novelty and excitement would draw a congregation, where there was no power from on High; and that a man who would preach a sermon standing on his head, would draw ten times as large a congregation as I. Grimaldi turned preacher would fill St. Paul's to suffocation. Secondly, I felt my ignorance and want of experience, my deep pollution and sinfulness, and utter unfitness and unworthiness to be a teacher and leader of the people.

I was enabled, however, to contend for the power of vital godliness, and the attending deficiencies and obstacles of the way, and endeavoured to show that it was no easy or common thing to be a Christian. I particularly aimed my shafts against those who, according to their preaching, were in the third heaven, and yet never spoke of trials proportionate to their faith.

Mr. Triggs, of Plymouth, was my immediate predecessor, and I am told fills the chapel very much. They say there are but four or five ministers who fill the place, amongst whom they reckon Kershaw, Tiptaft, and my unworthy self. I had almost resolved that I would not break the bread at Zoar this time, but Justins pressed me so warmly, and saying that the friends wished me so much to do it, that I felt I could not decline. I think you know my aversion to putting myself thus prominently forward, and I can say I scarce ever felt more sensibly unfit and unworthy. But my frame was solemnized, and I was enabled to pray and speak with some simplicity. The galleries were nearly full of spectators, and I dare say some remarks which I dropped upon close communion did not suit many. One woman came into the vestry afterwards to set me right, which she failed in doing, though I received her experience, which she told me, as a striking one.

A lady at Kensington, a widow, who has an establishment for twenty-four young ladies, came to me in the vestry last Tuesday, and had an interview with me yesterday. I cannot narrate all her history, but it appears she has been under spiritual exercises for some years. About two years ago a friend put into her hand my pamphlet about the Church of England, which, according to her account, opened her eyes and drove her out of the Establishment. Not able to find food amongst the Dissenters, she joined a party who met to read and expound the Scriptures. On discovering that some of the party lived in known and justified sin, she left them, and meditated returning to the Church; but a singular coincidence threw "Winter afore Harvest" into her hands, which decided her never to go back; and learning from the *Gospel Standard* that I was to be at Zoar, she determined to come and see me, and take my advice what to do. Seeing me so young, and, as I suppose, ruddy as youthful David, she thought she could not open her mind to me, till I took a text which had been applied to her mind with power some years ago, and then she determined to come forward and ask my advice how to act. She said she did not mind losing all her scholars if she could but know where to go to hear and what to do. I liked some things she said; but she has been badly nursed. She is quite a lady in her manners and appearance, but says she cares not how mean and poor her companions are, if she could but hear truth. I could give her no advice but to seek counsel of the Lord.

Poor Fowler broke a blood-vessel again on Saturday, and of course could not preach yesterday. The deacons wished me to preach for him to-morrow, but being published here I could not. I thank you for your kind invitation for myself and fair companion, which I hope to accept in due time. I cannot fix exactly the time, as it will depend on our visit to Plymouth. I think of staying in town a week, and then of going to see my mother, but you may depend upon it I will endeavour to give you what time I can. I hope you will write often, as, believe me, I would sooner hear from you than most of my correspondents. I have written a short P.S. to Tiptaft. And now, my dear friend, with my Christian love to friend Dredge and all the friends, from

Your affectionate Friend,
J. C. P.

(31)

To Miss Richmond.

London, June 22nd, 1839.

My dear Miss Richmond,—I am sorry that it will not be in my power to accept your kind invitation, and that of the friends, to come to Stadham, as my engagements have been made for some time, and I have already refused several invitations since I came to town. It would, indeed, give me pleasure to see my old friends at Stadham and the neighbourhood, and converse with them on the things that belong to our everlasting peace, and the many and various ups and downs that we meet by the way.

I find myself in the old track still, nor can I get into a smoother road. But in my right mind, and that is a rare mind to be in, I feel it is a better and safer path than the vain confidence of puffed-up professors. It is easy for a dead, unfeeling soul to presume, but it is hard for a living God-fearing soul to believe. Servants ride upon horses, a vain thing to save a man, whilst princes walk as servants upon the earth. Surely, there are many whose excellency (in their own estimation) mounts up to the heavens, and whose head (not their hearts) reaches unto the clouds, and yet they shall never see the rivers, the floods, the brooks of honey and butter, but the heaven shall reveal their iniquity, and the earth (God's children) shall rise up against them (Job xx). The whole testimony and spirit of the word of everlasting truth is to put down the mighty from their seats, and exalt them of low degree ; to fill the hungry with good things, and to send the rich empty away. Thus the lame take the prey, the blind see out of obscurity and out of darkness, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor in spirit have the gospel preached to them. But if we are never feelingly and experimentally lame, blind, leprous, deaf, dead, and poor, surely we can have no meetness for, nor interest in gospel blessings.

I trust I learned lessons in your little village, which have been, and are now, profitable to me since I have been brought out more into the public ministry of the word ; and the experience I there had, often in sickness and sorrow, of the deceitfulness, hypocrisy, pride, presumption, vileness, and desperate wickedness of my heart, as well as of God's mercy and goodness, have, I trust, in some faint and feeble measure qualified me to testify of the inward evils of the heart in others, and to contend for a free-grace salvation, experimentally made known. I am now in this large metropolis, where I believe amidst all its wickedness and abominations God has a living family, and the chapel where I preach, though large, is very fully attended. Amidst the many scores of ministers, there seem to be few indeed who are privileged to undo heavy burdens, and let the oppressed go free. Most are grovelling in the dregs of Arminianism, or soaring aloft in the regions of letter Calvinism. Few, it appears to me, feed the flock of slaughter.

I have heard very recently from Oakham, and am glad to say that Mr. Tiptaft is better. Preaching, however, so much injures his health, that he has been compelled to give up for a time. Both he and the people feel much his being thus laid aside. As to my own health, it has been, through mercy, considerably better than when I was at Stadham, the damp situation of which never agreed with me. I have enjoyed, too, better health since I left Allington, and suffer now less from preaching twice than once when at Stadham.

I am glad to hear that Brookland has been promoted from the barn to overlook his fellow-workmen, and sincerely hope the Lord will make him faithful to his earthly master. He will have many temptations to be otherwise, and Satan will lie hard upon him to cast him into a snare, and thus thrust him down ; and then the ungodly would shout. I understand Mr. Kay was lately at Stadham. I hope the Lord was with him to bless the word.

Remember me affectionately to the friends who worship in your little place. Greet them by name. Were I to mention some and omit others, the latter might think I had forgotten them or neglected them, when I had not. I remember most with Christian affection, and should be glad to see them once more in the flesh.

Yours very sincerely, for truth's sake,
J. C. P.

THE END.

APPENDIX I

WILLIAM TIPTAFT'S APHORISMS.

THE following characteristic "Sayings" have been selected from many others which were published on behalf of a devoted friend not long after their author's death by J. C. Pembrey, Oxford:

Are you ready to shake hands with death ?

Can you call God your Father, Christ your elder Brother, and the blessed Spirit your Friend and Comforter ?

Has your religion ever kept you awake at night ? Have you ever esteemed it a mercy that you are out of hell ?

Have you ever stood on the same plot of ground with the publican, crying, "God be merciful to me a sinner" ?

Has your religion cost you anything ? If it has cost you nothing, it is worth nothing.

God is pleased with gratitude,—He gets so little of it.

If you are to go to heaven, you must be made fit for heaven. There are prepared mansions for a prepared people.

I am not afraid of alarming people too much about their souls. I wish I could hear more crying out, "What must I do to be saved ?" and crying earnestly for mercy.

If I preach to please men, I am not the servant of Christ.

If you have one grain of grace, you must die to know how rich you are.

However you may be persecuted, they cannot put you where you cannot pray. What a mercy!

Sin is of a hardening nature: like the rubbing of my hand, it is at first tender, but if continued, becomes callous.

Sinning will stop praying, or praying will stop sinning.

How hard it is to pray against besetting sins!

A prayerless man is a careless man.

Show me a man who prays for himself alone, and I will show you a man who alone is prayed for.

When the Lord finds His rod, His people find their knees.

Where we see blossom we hope for fruit, but where there are no blossoms we are sure there will be no fruit.

Show me a man's books and show me a man's companions, and I will tell you what sort of a man he is.

The worldly think little of God's people, but they *expect* much: they would be more surprised to see any of you who attend this chapel at the races than any other sect. How they would talk about it!

Children take more notice of what their parents *do* than of what they *say.*

If you were to go about telling people that you had an inheritance worth a million of worlds, and yet were to be out of temper for half-an-hour about a thing not worth sixpence, they would not believe you.

We are not going to jump out of Delilah's lap into Abraham's bosom.

"Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

Dead fish go with the stream, living ones against it.

Real religion is, to be severed from the world, to be married to Christ, and to bring forth fruit unto God.

I used to try to reconcile the friendship of the world and God's favour, but I found it would not do: "He that will not forsake all is not worthy of Me."

Many of the Lord's people have troubles which they cannot tell at every corner of the street.

You must not always expect the wind to be at your back all your way to heaven.

Who are you and what are you, that you should expect to escape trouble?

It is better to be preserved in the brine of tribulation than to rot in honey.

The rougher the file, the less the rust.

We come into the world crying, we go through it complaining, and go out of it groaning.

God will give dying grace in the dying hour.

If free-grace will not save a soul, free-will will not.

There is something great in real religion.

Many are going about saying what they are doing for God; but who can tell what He is doing for them?

It is the living child that draws out the breast. Some want *en*couraging; some need *dis*couraging.

I have no objection to your calling God your Father, if He has called you His child.

They are well kept whom the Lord keeps.

If rich people only knew when they died, how their relations would scramble for their money, the worms for their bodies, and the devils for their souls, they would not be so anxious to save money.

We must lose things to know the value of them. It is a dry well which makes people know the value of water.

They have taken one "Woe" off me since I have been in this neighbourhood: "Woe unto you, when all men speak well of you! for so did their fathers of *the false prophets*."

All who go to heaven must be saved by a baptist [the Lord Jesus Christ.]

We are not to choose our own crosses.

How many are caught in the golden net, and how few in the gospel net!

I wish I could love Christ more, and be more concerned for His honour and glory. I wish I could love the Lord more, and speak more of Him; if I did not speak well of His name I should be a base, ungrateful wretch, for He has been a good God to me, both in providence and grace. YOU MAY THINK OF THIS WHEN MY GREY HAIRS ARE LAID IN THE GRAVE.

NOTE.—The following extract from the Minute-book of the old Baptist Chapel at Devizes, Wilts, kindly supplied by a friend, is gratefully accepted in correction of an uncertainty in the Introduction, p. 133.

"On Lord's-day, June 17, 1832, Mr. William Tiptaft, a clergyman of the Church of England, was baptized in the chapel by Mr. Hitchcock."

Roger Hitchcock of Andover, one of the forty or fifty ordained ministers of the Church of England who seceded at that period, had himself been baptized in the same chapel on Jan. 2, 1827, and he subsequently ministered there from 1830 to 1834, though he declined to accept the pastorate. He died at Budleigh Salterton, Devon, in 1851.

APPENDIX II.

DISCOVERY AT RIPPLE.

The greater part of this book was already in type when the present Rector of Ripple, the Rev. Telford Varley, M.A., Cantab., himself a scholar and, like my grandfather, a Seatonian Prizeman, brought to my knowledge and has since taken the kindest possible pains to decipher and transcribe a touching record of my father's last days in his old home, in the form of some Latin verses of his own composition, dated April 1, 1823 (exactly six weeks, that is, after his father's lamented death), which, though written only in pencil inside an attic cupboard, have been most marvellously preserved to the present day. They not only give us a glimpse into the young undergraduate's sorrowing, but as yet unawakened heart at a period of his life—he was not yet twenty-one—of which he has left no other record, but, for the few whom it may interest, they afford a measure of his scholarship.

Till then, it must be remembered, he had led a cloistered life amongst classical scholars and clerical dons, left over, as it were, from the 18th century with its high sense of decorum and its horror of "enthusiasm," to whom a sound knowledge of Latin and Greek and their literatures, with or without the gift of apt quotation, was the one thing needful, the enviable hall-mark of a scholar and a gentleman. The dead hand of the past, in fact, lay heavy on their shoulders, and nothing short of a religious conversion, the still small voice heard in their inmost souls, as my father heard it, could give them strength to shake it off, and open their blind eyes to everlasting issues. Years, indeed, after he had turned his back on a dry classicism, and had learnt in suffering the courage of his emotions and the power of the living word, I find my father in his Diary dropping instinctively into Latin, when, worn out with much preaching, he has to confess to some passing weariness of mind or body. "Ad omnia misere socors"—miserably indifferent to everything—"Otiose nihil faciendo inter nugas tempus consumpsi"—too lazy to do any work I frittered away my time on trifles. Such self-reproachful entries are not uncommon.

So, when the sudden death of his beloved father brought on him the first great shock and sorrow of his life, followed by the cruel wrench of having to turn out with his mother and family from Ripple's sheltered haven, the only home he had ever known, it was to his old school-friends, the Latin poets, and especially, I think, to Ovid, that he turned for the form and for the idiom in which to express his feelings and give his heart relief, little dreaming that his carefully pondered lines would ever come down to us. It had given him comfort, no doubt, to weave his misery into Latin verses, but that he should have inscribed them just where no one was likely to see them, and still less to understand them, might seem, to those who have no sense of providence, more like an act of blind instinct than one of deliberate purpose, the sort of inconsequent urge that prompts a dog to bury his bone. It was all his own secret, between himself and his "dear heart," as the old Greeks have it, for now that his father was dead, there was no one in the house who could unravel what he had written; not his poor widowed mother, nor his elder sister, the "My dear Fanny" of his letters, nor his half-witted elder brother, Augustus, nor pretty young Mary Ann, the baby of the family, with her hair still down her back.

The rectory of Ripple has been much enlarged since my father addressed to it his pitiful "Vale, vale, in aeternum vale!" It consisted then only of the oblong block with the dormer windows in its high-pitched roof, seen to the left in the Illustration (page 5), though there were no doubt stables, outhouses and ample storerooms in the rear. The big bread-oven in the back-kitchen reminds one of the days when tithe was paid in kind, and my grandfather's man went round the harvest-fields, before the corn was carried, and thrust a little green bush into every tenth sheaf, to claim it for the service of the church. The space between the rectory and the churchyard, shown in the foreground of the photograph as a tennis lawn, was in the old days an orchard, which my grandfather himself had planted, and of which there is still a tradition in the village. I like to think of my father as pacing slowly up and down under the pink-budded apple-trees, rehearsing his carefully studied lines, while ever and anon, half in sorrow for himself, his heart goes out to the dear form so newly laid (positum) in the earth beside his four dead children, underneath the ponderous paving-stone still to be seen, on lifting up the matting, in the central aisle of Ripple church.

The garret, for I can call it nothing else, in which are the inscriptions, and which my father had shared since childhood with his elder brother, poor feckless "Guck," is reached by a dark, break-neck stair, and is so low, when one gets there, that one can barely stand upright in it. The floor-space, twenty-one feet by twelve, gives room and little more for a narrow bed on either hand beneath the sloping rafters. It must have been in one of those two dark corners that my father lay for weeks as a boy, suffering agonies, as he tells us in one of his sermons,* from a barbarous treatment, the scars of which he carried to the grave. On account of a severe lung-attack, it was thought necessary, among other drastic remedies, to keep open a perpetual blister on his chest, which produced a deep ulcerated wound with much "proud flesh." As the wound would not heal until this had been burnt away with caustic, his poor mother had to drag herself up the dark stairs every morning in order to touch this "quick raw flesh," compared in the sermon to the leprosy of sin (Leviticus xiii. 10), with bluestone (sulphate of copper). And "Oh!" he adds, "how I shrank from her hand!"

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* "The Leper Diseased." *Early Sermons*, Vol. III., p. 237. Farncombe, 1906.

In the one and only upright wall, between the low door and the projecting fire-place and flues, there had once been an odd corner, which a previous rector had paid the village carpenter to board up and furnish with a light door, so that his young daughters might have no excuse for leaving their attic untidy. This *garde-robe*, this hanging cupboard, measures a little over two feet square, and fortunately its interior has never in all these hundred odd years been visited by painter's brush. It was on its virgin boards, on the planed "reverse" of the door, and on the inside of the adjacent partition, that my father pencilled his verses on a level with his eyes. It was, indeed, the only spot on to which there fell sufficient light through the low and narrow casement. A garret! And yet, methought, as Mr. Varley kindly threw the beam from his electric torch on to the faintly pencilled lines, how a long-past emotion, if deeply enough and genuinely felt, can light up even a garret!

Such in essentials was the retired village rectory which my father and his housemates had to leave in exchange for a new, if less cramped abode among strangers. "Charae Aedes" he apostrophizes it, reverting with youthful pedantry to an obsolete spelling which still survives in our "charity" and the French "cher"—

(1) *Charae Aedes, quae me primis fovistis ab annis,*
Qua primum lusi, tuta valete mea!
Ut te liquissem, me sors nimis improba cogit,
Immemorem esse tui cogere nulla potest.
J. C. Philpot, April 1, 1823.

To these not quite impeccable lines my kind friend of many years, the Poet-Laureate, has favoured me with the following translation:

"Dear rooms, in which from my first happy years,
In childhood, I would play (safe, then), farewell!
Though overwhelming Fate forces me from you,
No Fate so strong can force me to forget you."

The second inscription, immediately below, consists of two lines which are not so clearly decipherable. The first is obviously a pentameter; the second, it may be inferred, was meant for a hexameter.

(2) *Nunquam te vita charior usque, pater,*
Aspiciam positum . . te semper amabo.
J. C. P., Ap. 1, 1823.

Translation, as before:

"Father, dearer than life, I shall never see you
As one laid dead in the grave; I shall ever love you."

The above inscriptions are on the "reverse" of the cupboard door. The next, which is in prose, is on the inside of the partition.

(3) *Haec in quibus a cunis usque ad*
annum aetatis vigesimum felix habitavit
tuta linquere . . (invito?) scripsit.

J. C. Philpot, Ap. 1, 1823.

A word or two is here obscure. The sense is apparently:

"O rooms! in which from the cradle until manhood
He who writes lived, both safe and happy, now
He leaves you, though unwilling."

Underneath this is written, quite plain to see:

(4) *Vale, vale, in aeternum vale!*

And still lower down a quotation from Virgil, which has not yet been identified.

The discovery of these inscriptions has given me a welcome opportunity of relating the romantic story of my grandfather's birth and upbringing somewhat more fully than seemed appropriate in the Introduction.

Early in 1760, or possibly in the previous autumn, a good-looking young couple, neither of them many months older than the promising youth who was soon to ascend the British throne as George III., were married at Leicester. Their names were Charles Philpot and Frances Groome. The former, to judge from the pencil-sketch in my possession (see Illustration, p. 10), was a dapper, delicate-featured youth, with a good brow and sensitive lips; the bride, even in the oil-portrait taken in later years, shows signs of having possessed considerable beauty. Of Charles Philpot little is known, except that he came from Lewes, played the harpsichord, and was possibly a teacher of music, for time was not vouchsafed him in which to show his quality. Some illness carried him off at the early age of 23, and on August 4th, 1760, two days after his death, he was buried in the grave-yard of St. Martin's, Leicester, leaving his young widow to bear the consequences of their somewhat improvident union. The man-child, born after his death and baptised by his name, was my grandfather, Charles Philpot.

A few years later Frances Groome had the good fortune to find an excellent second husband in a worthy Leicestershire yeoman, named Joseph Glover, who, as the marriage proved childless, most ably and willingly devoted all his care to bringing up his promising young step-son, with an affection for which that same step-son never ceased to be grateful.

At that date the Wyggeston Free Grammar-school at Leicester, under the able head-mastership of the Rev. Gerard Andrewes, had achieved a high repute for the fine classical scholars it turned out, the most distinguished of whom was that noted oddity, the Rev. Richard Farmer, D.D., a pioneer in Shakespearean exegesis and eventually Master of Emmanuel College, Cambridge. It was due to him, I believe, that young Charles Philpot, when the time came for him to go up to the University, after as a day-boy he had learnt all that the Grammar-school could teach him, chose Emmanuel for his College, made friends with many other scholars as eager as himself, and had his mind turned towards what was to be the rather fruitless hobby of his life, historical research. Joseph Glover, having seen his young step-son through the critical years of adolescence, died in 1778, leaving behind him such a fragrant memory that my grandfather, when he came to have children of his own, named his third son, my father, Joseph, after him.

Frances Groome did not long remain a widow, and this time, as if to make up for her early struggles and privations, she found a rich husband in Robert Hubbard, a prominent Leicester solicitor, who had a daughter, Harriet, by a previous marriage, and who happened to be legal adviser to Rev. Peter Lafargue, of Stamford. By this time Charles Philpot was a promising young curate and private chaplain to the Earl of Harborough, and, living as at times he did under the same roof, he was naturally thrown much into the company of Miss Harriet Hubbard. It became the fond wish of both parents that their respective step-children should marry, and keep the money in the family. But, of course, it fell out otherwise, thanks chiefly to that exuberant young couple, the son and daughter of Peter Lafargue. Charles Philpot, the staid Anglo-Saxon, fell before the lively, exotic charm of the dark-eyed Maria Lafargue, while her brother, Peter Augustus, a dashing young cavalry subaltern, carried off the more homely Miss Hubbard and her handsome fortune.

Frances Groome lived just long enough to see her son happily married, and safely installed in Ripple rectory, then died in her sixtieth year, and was buried in the same consecrated ground in which her boy-husband had been laid five and thirty years earlier.

The Rev. Charles Philpot had eight children by Maria, his wife, and, man of good sense that he was, could find no better way of recording his affectionate remembrance of his elders, than by naming the younger generation after them, as will be seen from the following list:—

*1. Charles, born Feb. 3, 1796, died June 22, 1817, aged 21, whilst a midshipman in H.M.S. *Florida*.

2. Frances Maria, born April 5, 1797, married Dec. 14, 1840, George S. B. Isbell, a minister, died August 11, 1870, aged 73.

*3. Maria Frances, born August 24, 1798, died July 13, 1812, in her fourteenth year.

*4. Augustus Robert, born August 19, 1800, died unmarried, April 23, 1837, aged 36.

5. Joseph Charles, born Sept. 13, 1802, married July 24, 1838, Sarah Louisa Keal (born June 12, 1818), died Dec. 9, 1869, aged 67.

*6. Elizabeth, born Sept. 12, 1804, died Dec. 25, 1813, aged 9.

*7. Henry, born Jan. 19, 1807, died, while a pupil at Rochester Grammar-school, May 8, 1820, aged 13.

8. Mary Ann, born Jan. 30, 1809, married May 29, 1832, Capt. Stephen Ross Watts, R.N.; had issue one son, four daughters, and many grandchildren. Died March 5, 1848, aged 39.

The Rev. Charles Philpot and those five of his children whose names are marked with an asterisk were buried in Ripple Church, as recorded on a large gravestone in the middle aisle.

My father, I may add, was warmly attached to his younger brother, Henry, an attractive boy of considerable promise, and he felt his death acutely, hastened presumably as it had been by the brutality of his schoolmates, who turned the ailing child out of his bed one night, and made him lie for hours on a bare stone floor. Such, at least, is my memory of what I heard from my father's lips.

APPENDIX III.

THE LIBERTY OF THE GOSPEL.

WHAT a poor, newly-converted Galilee Jew must have felt, in the way of relief, when James or Peter assured him that he never again need toil up to the earthly Jerusalem to take part in the obsolete rites commanded by The Law; such, in a measure, I think, may well have been the sense of emancipation felt by our young Seceders, when they found themselves no longer "entangled with the yoke of bondage," nor restricted each to his own parish, like a carp to its pond, but free to go about and preach the truth wheresoever they were bidden, though we have seen how William Tiptaft's late Bishop did his utmost to prevent it. For them "the liberty of the Gospel" had recovered the meaning it enjoyed in the time of the apostles, and seldom since. "Have I not made a good exchange ?" to quote my father again; "An easy conscience for a galled one, liberty for bondage, worship in the spirit for worship in the form, and a living people for dead formalists."

The above thoughts came to me quite recently as I was looking through the old note-books in which my father, from the time he left the Church, most carefully recorded the texts of all his sermons, and the places where he preached them. Up to the year 1840 none appear to have been "taken down," and the only ones published were the well-known *Winter afore Harvest*, and *The Heir of Heaven*, etc., which, as we gather from his Letters (Nos. 21 to 25), he committed to paper from memory. But from his records we find that during the years 1835–1839 he often preached from the same text at several different places, though the sermon was by no means necessarily the same. "Many of the Calvinist ministers," he writes (Jan. 9, 1840), "could preach the same sermon from the same words to any congregation. But it is not so with me. I am dependent on the Lord for every sermon and every occasion; and find a different vein of thought, or different mode of expressing myself, which varies with the congregation."

It has occurred to me that a brief summary of the texts from which he preached his most favoured sermons during the years covered by the Letters included in the present volume, together with the names of the places where he preached them, would provide an interesting supplement to his Letters, as enabling the reader to trace the movements not only of his poor vulnerable body, but those, too, of his deeply exercised mind and spirit. Some of the discourses were again delivered at a date subsequent to 1840, when a reporter was present, and these, as indicated, may be found amongst his *Early Sermons*, re-issued in four volumes as recently as 1906. So carefully were his sermons thought out, and such was his command of language, that they could usually be printed off from the reporter's "copy," and published almost without alteration. The texts quoted below, I may add, represent less than a twentieth of those which he chose to preach from during the five active years in question.

J. H. P.

GENESIS xlix. 22—24: "Joseph is a fruitful bough," etc.

1836. Allington, February 24.
1839. Stamford, April 28.
1839. Zoar Chapel, Gt. Alie Street, London, June 9.
„ Lavington. August 6.

"The Fruitful Bough and the Strong Bow."
Early Sermons, Vol. IV., p. 224.

LEVITICUS xiii. 45, 46: "And the leper in whom the plague is," etc.

1835. Allington, November 15.
1836. Oakham, December 4.
1837. Manchester, Sept. 26.
1838. Zoar, June 24.

"The Leper Diseased." *Early Sermons*, Vol. III., p. 228.

xiv. 14: "And the priest shall take some of the blood," etc.

1835. Allington, November 15.
1836. Oakham, December 4.

"The Leper Cleansed." *Early Sermons*, Vol. III., p. 246.

DEUTERONOMY xxxiii. 27: "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."

1835. Melksham, December 9.
1837. Zoar, August 13.
„ Oakham, August 20.
1837. Manchester, Sept. 3.
1838. Brighton, July 1.

JUDGES viii. 4: "Faint, yet pursuing."

1838. Allington, February 25.
1839. Oakham, January 15.
„ Stamford, January 20.
1839. Zoar, June 27.
„ Upavon August 16.

1 SAMUEL ii. 8: "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust," etc.

1835. Allington, June 14.
1837. Oakham, February 5.
„ Welwyn, August 15.
1837. Manchester, Sept. 12.
1839. Stamford, Sept. 16.

xxii. 2: "Every one that was in distress," etc.

1837. Allington, April 23.
„ Manchester, Sept. 3.
1837. Oakham, November 5.
1839. Market Deeping, Oct. 23.

1 CHRONICLES iv. 10: "And Jabez called on the God of Israel," etc.

1835. Stadhampton, April 30.
1836. Allington, June 12.
„ Stamford, July 17.
1837. Abingdon, March 19.
1838. Brighton, July 8.

"The Prayer of Jabez." *Early Sermons*, Vol. I., p. 174.

2 CHRONICLES vi. 40: "Now, my God, let, I beseech Thee, Thine eyes be open," etc.

1835. Allington, Dec. 6.
1836. Oakham, November 27.
1837. Manchester, Sept. 10.
1837. Stamford, Sept. 29.
1838. Zoar, June 17.

JOB x. 15: "If I be wicked, woe unto me," etc.

1835. Stadhampton, May 10.
1837. Oakham, January 22.
„ Allington, March 26.
1839. Zoar, June 20.
„ Stamford, November 21.

xxviii. 20, 21: "Whence then cometh wisdom? and where is the place of understanding?" etc.

1835. Abingdon, May 31.
1836. Allington, February 14.
1838. Devizes, February 21.

PSALMS xxv. 14: "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him," etc.

1835. Allington, December 20.
1838. Devizes, January 31.
1838. Oakham, May 16.
„ Brighton, July 15.

lxxiv. 9: "We see not our signs."

1838. Allington, August 26.
1839. Zoar, June 16.

"Signs seen and not seen." *Early Sermons*, Vol. I., p. 332.

Psalms xcvii. 11: "Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart."

1835. Stadhampton, May 21.
,, Avebury, November 26.
1838. Stamford, November 25.

cxix. 130: "The entrance of Thy words giveth light."

1835. Upavon, November 5.
,, Allington, November 25.
1839. Oakham, March 24.
,, Stamford, March 28.

Proverbs xiv. 27: "The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death."

1836. Allington, Sept. 11.
1838. Stamford, November 11.
1839. Zoar, June 30.
,, Allington, July 7.

xxxi. 8, 9: "Open thy mouth for the dumb," etc.

1837. Allington, July 2.
,, Nottingham, August 27.
1838. Stamford, April 8.
,, Zoar, June 21.

"Opening the mouth for the dumb." On behalf of the Aged Pilgrims' Friend Society. *Early Sermons*, Vol. I., p. 375.

Song of Solomon i. 7, 8: "Tell me, O Thou whom my soul loveth," etc.

1835. Abingdon, May 31.
,, Allington, June 21.
1839. Stamford, March 31.
1839. Oakham, April 9.
,, Zoar, June 16.
,, Trowbridge, July 22.

Isaiah xviii. 5, 6: "For afore the harvest, when the bud is perfect," etc.

1837. Trowbridge, June 25.
1837. Oakham, August 20.

The well-known sermon, *Winter afore Harvest*.

xxviii. 16, 17: "Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone," etc.

1835. Allington, June 10.
1838. Pewsey, March 11.
1838. Stamford, April 22.
,, Zoar, June 29.

xl. 28—31: "Hast thou not known?" etc.

1835. Allington, October 4.
1836. Stamford, December 18.
1837. Manchester, Sept. 24.
1838. Bishop's Cannings, March 1.
1839. Oakham, April 7.

xlv. 2, 3: "I will go before thee," etc.

1837. Allington, December 25.
1839. Stamford, February 14.
1839. Oakham, February 24.

"Treasures of Darkness." *Early Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 206.

Isaiah l. 10, 11: "Who is among you that feareth the Lord," etc.

1835. Allington, Nov. 1.
1836. Stamford, Oct. 23.

Subsequently published as *The Heir of Heaven walking in Darkness and the Heir of Hell walking in Light.*

Jeremiah xv. 12: "Shall iron break the northern iron and the steel?"

1835. Pewsey, July 2.
1838. Zoar, June 14.
1838. Oakham July 22.
„ Trowbridge, Oct. 7.

xlv. 5: "And seekest thou great things for thyself?" etc.

1836. Allington, February 28.
„ Stamford, October 30.
1837. Abingdon, March 19.
„ Devizes, April 26.
1838. Welwyn, June 1.
„ Zoar, June 5.
„ Oakham, December 4.

xlviii. 11: "Moab hath been at ease from his youth," etc.

1835. Pewsey, October 8.
„ Trowbridge, Oct. 11.
1836. Peterborough, Nov. 3.
1837. Manchester, Sept. 24.
1838. Zoar, June 17.
1839. Oakham, January 27.

Ezekiel xxxiv. 15, 16: "I will feed My flock," etc.

1835. Abingdon, April 26.
„ Exeter, August 30.
1836. Devizes, March 23.
1836. Stamford, July 26.
1837. Manchester, Sept. 19.

Matthew xii. 20: "A bruised reed," etc.

1836. Allington, March 13.
1837. Oakham, February 26.
1838. Stamford, April 15.
1838. Brighton, July 16.
„ Woburn, July 18.
„ Exeter, August 23.

John viii. 31, 32: "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him," etc.

1835. Chislehampton, Jan. 11.
1837. Allington, December 13.
1838. Oakham, May 9.
1839. Stamford, February 3.

"Genuine Discipleship." *Early Sermons*, Vol. III. p. 139.

xv. 1, 2: "I am the true vine," etc.

1836. Allington, May 1.
„ Stamford, November 6.
1839. Oakham, December 29.

"The Vine and its Branches." *Early Sermons*, Vol. I., p. 355.

1 Corinthians ii. 5: "That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

1835. Allington, June 28.
1837. Nottingham, August 28.
1839. Trowbridge, July 21.
„ Stamford, October 23.

2 Corinthians iv. 11: "For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake," etc.

1839. Stamford, February 7.
„ Oakham, February 10.
1839. Pewsey, July 31.
„ Zoar, August 29.

"The Life of Christ manifested in the Death of the Creature." *Early Sermons*, Vol. III., p. 71.

vi. 9: "As chastened, and not killed."

1836. Allington, August 28.
1837. Oakham, February 12.
1837. Stamford, October 15.
1839. Abingdon, March 28.

Galatians v. 17: "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit," etc.

1836. Allington, March 20.
1836. Welwyn, July 31.
1836. Stamford, October 13.
„ Oakham, October 16.

1 Thessalonians i. 3: "Remembering without ceasing," etc.

1837. Peterborough, Oct. 17.
„ Allington, December 3.
1838. Trowbridge, Feb. 11.
„ Abingdon, March 25.
1838. Oakham, May 13.
„ Zoar, June 10.
„ Brighton, July 13.

"The Three Working Graces." *Early Sermons*, Vol. IV., p. 132.

1 Timothy iii. 9: "Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience."

1836. Allington, August 21.
1838. Oakham, December 27.
1839. Stamford, January 6.
1839. Zoar, June 23.
„ Devizes, August 21.
1840. Stoke, August 4.

Jude 3: "That ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

1835. Studley, December 3.
1838. Allington, October 14.
„ Stamford, October 28.
1839. Zoar, July 2.
1840. Leicester, Dec. 25.

"The Earnest Contention for Living Faith."
Early Sermons, Vol. I., p. 98.

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